Mysticism and Emotional Transformation in a Seventeenth-Century English Convent

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Declaration

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Signed _ ____

Date _29 June 2020_________

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Abstract

Despite the growing scholarship on early modern English nuns, little analysis has been done on their practice of mysticism and how it affected women and conventual life. Research has focused on the nuns' spirituality, authorship, identity, as well as cultural and intellectual production. This study builds upon this scholarship and applies a history of emotions lens to analyse the mysticism included in the spiritual writing of nuns. Compared to other English orders during this time, the English Carmelites were atypical in their spiritual practice, documenting intense mystical visions and experiences in their annals. The first English Carmelite convent, founded in Antwerp in 1619, presents an interesting case study of how emotional, visionary mysticism legitimised their convent under a post-Tridentine Church. Each chapter engages with a different emotions methodology, across different aspects of conventual life, to build a wider, more nuanced analysis of the experience of early modern mysticism and how it affected the convent. First, it will be shown how the prominent dispute between the Carmelite nuns and friars formed a unifying "emotional community" within and around the convent. This community ultimately sought to legitimise its institutional practices and in so doing, also legitimised its practice of emotionally transformative mysticism. This will be done by separating, naming and studying multiple "emotional communities" involved in the dispute and the nuns' lives to find the social influences on their mysticism. Second, the spiritual writing and methods of St Teresa of Avila and St Ignatius of Loyola will be examined to link and explain the spiritual influences that guided the "emotional practices" of the convent. The saints' writings will be briefly analysed to compare with the mystical experiences of the seventeenth-century nuns. This will demonstrate how their mysticism was learned and practiced using these saints as their guide. Third, in considering that both Teresa and Ignatius stressed the importance of reading in their spiritual methods, the books that belonged to the convent library, in conjunction with the spiritual writing of the nuns, will be compared to show how reading was

also an emotional tool that fed mystical practices. Using the Antwerp library collection currently held in the archive at Douai Abbey, guidebooks will be analysed as extensions of the Catholic Church's "emotional regime". As nuns felt they failed to conform to the emotional expectations of the regime and their spiritual mentors, they experienced "emotional suffering". It will be argued that through mystical experience, books are shown to effectively alleviate this suffering. Finally, these three aspects of the convent will be brought together through the analysis of the nuns' most prolific mystical visions, those experienced within the physical space. It will be shown how their experiences of mysticism created an "affective atmosphere" within the convent. This atmosphere fuelled, and was fuelled by, the mystical experiences of the nuns in an emotionally transformative way. This chapter will show how mystical events were grounded in the space of the convent and were experienced communally, either through witnessing a mystical nun, or shared through the convent's annals. This thesis aims to show how seventeenth-century English Carmelite mysticism was learned and practiced as a spiritual and emotional tool. It led not just to mystical union with God, but also served to emotionally transform the practitioner in times of need. Furthermore, the documentation of these experiences in the convent annals served to edify the community, creating both an affective atmosphere and emotional community of mysticism throughout the convent's history. Finally, the acceptance of such an atypical community by Church superiors and the wider community contributed to legitimising the nuns' historical narrative built upon mysticism, and ultimately gave them agency within the seventeenth-century Church.

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Introduction

> I continued in the same desires to see her and be with her again, and being out of hope of this by the fear I had of her death I was in extreem affliction one time after I had been a long space weeping and making my complaint in the Quire, before the Blessed Sacrament being weary I sat down in a cornner half a Sleep, there came like a bright Cloud allmost over my head, in which I perceived our Blessed Saviour like the Age of 10 or 12 years who I saw so beautifull that the content tooke away the extreem grief and heavyiness of heart that I was in, he said to me what is in my Creature whom you love so much which is not in me, if it be beauty you love in her look on me if it be wisdom or power see if I have it not, if it be noble disposition, her meekness and love to you, consider mine to you, and all that is good in her is in me, and that I am all good and fill all places, so this past And I remained comforted both in Soul and Body.[1]

Anne Worsley (Anne of the Ascension, 1588-1644), the first prioress of the English Carmelites, felt a deep admiration for her mentor, Anne Manzanas (Anne of St Bartholomew, 1550-1626). Anne Manzanas had been her prioress throughout her novitiate and encouraged her to be part of the English convent's foundation in Antwerp in 1619. In the Antwerp annals, Anne Worsley's spiritual writing documented the constant grief she felt at being separated from this mother figure. In above passage, Anne Worsley had learned of her mentor's illness, late in Anna Mazanas' life. In her distress, Anne Worsley sought spiritual guidance by sitting in the choir "weeping and making [her] complaint." Finally, exhausted, Anne Worsley received a mystical vision of Jesus Christ. Christ entered the space of the choir, "like a bright Cloud," appearing before the grieving nun. His mere presence and beauty, as a young boy, eliminated

[1] "Short Colections of the Beginings of Our English Monastery of Teresians in Antwerp with Some Few Perticulars of Our Dear Deceased Religious," in *English Convents in Exile, 1600-1800, Vol. 4 Life Writing II,* ed. Katrien Daemen-de Gelder (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013), 10-11.

her extreme emotions of grief. Then he spoke and reminded her of his presence, his love, living within in all things, people, and places. Through Christ, she would never be separated from Anne Mazanas, even in death. Anne Worsley stated that she was "comforted both in Soul and Body" because of this mystical experience. There are two aspects of this passage this thesis will aim to explain. First, that a mystical vision like this was experienced in a seventeenth-century English convent, much less documented and included in the convent's annals. Second, that strong emotions were described, as an integral element, throughout the experience. Women's mysticism had always been seen with more suspicion compared to that experienced by men. Stemming from Eve, women were spiritually weaker and succumbed to the temptations of the devil more easily than men. Only decades before Anne Worsley, the order's reformer, St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) had been scrutinised by the Inquisition for her mystical experiences.[2] Furthermore, intense emotional displays were not entirely acceptable for nuns learning to "die to the world."[3] This was especially true for emotional connections made between nuns, such as the close bond between Anne Worsley and her superior, something that was seen as dangerous to spiritual practice by even St Teresa of Avila.[4]

How then can this vision of Anne Worsley be reconciled with the general understanding of seventeenth-century Catholic spiritual life? The Antwerp annals contained more than forty similar mystical visions across the period of 1619 to 1699. They range from fainting, nose bleeds, and uncontrollable outbursts to mystically sensed sounds, smells, and ghostly or angelic visions. Certain nuns held conversations with Christ and other holy figures appeared numerous

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[2] Discussed at length in Alison Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

[3] For "dying to the world" see, Laurence Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns in Exile in the Seventeenth Century: Living Spirituality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 23-46.

[4] See chapter two, 93-96.

times. Further, each mystical experience is couched in emotional language; grief, despair, longing, and suffering are felt, and as a result of the mystical experience, the language changes to comfort, love, hope, and courage. This thesis will seek to analyse how the convent's mysticism, the driving force behind the convent's spirituality was practiced, experienced, understood, and recorded. Through the example of the Antwerp Carmelite convent, I will show how early modern mysticism was not just acceptable under their exiled circumstances, but that it was used as a tool for emotional transformation to better spiritual life. To do this, I will employ history of emotions methodologies that scholars in this field have only just begun to use. I will show how mysticism was not an uncommon spiritual phenomenon or a private experience for the mystical nun. Instead, it was something that was learned, practiced, and collectively felt both physically and through communal memory. For the Antwerp nuns, mysticism built the foundation of their convent and served to edify their community across centuries.

i. The English Carmelite Convent in Antwerp

Antwerp was the site of the first English Discalced Carmelite convent founded in 1619, thirty-seven years after St Teresa of Avila's death. The house, which served as the convent, was in the Hopsland district and no longer exists. The English recusant, Lady Mary Lovell founded the convent. Its first prioress was Anne Worsley until her death in 1644 at the age of fifty-five. Between 1619 and 1699, a total of eighty-nine women professed at Antwerp.[5] Not all of these

[5] Two women had professed previously at the Spanish Carmelite house in Mons, Spanish Netherlands. They left for the foundation of the Antwerp convent. These nuns were Anne Worsley, who professed in 1610; and Frances Ward (Teresa of Jesus, 1590-1649) who professed in 1611. Biographical information such as dates in this thesis were provided by, "Who were the Nuns?", https://wwtn.history.qmul.ac.uk/.

nuns stayed at the convent. As the English convent grew, they were directed to establish more English houses, including at Lierre and Hoogestraat. In 1716, during construction work on the Antwerp convent's crypt, the incorrupt body of Mary Wake (Mary Margaret of the Angels, 1617-1678) was discovered. Although she had died thirty-eight years prior, her body remained miraculously intact, and upon hearing of the discovery, the public flocked to the convent. The significance of this event caused the prioress Mary Birbeck (Mary Frances of St Teresa, 1674-1733) to commission individual Lives, or biographies, of Mary Wake, as well as, Catherine Burton (Mary Xaveria of the Angels, 1668-1714) and "composite, sequential Lives of all the other religious from 1619 onwards, to be contained in the annals."[6] The English religious houses remained in the Southern Netherlands until the French Revolutionary wars, when they fled to England and America. In America, they established a house in Baltimore. In England, communities were established at Lanherne and Darlington, both of which have now dissolved. Some documents were left behind in Antwerp and recovered later and are held in the Antwerp City Archives. Both the English and American communities saved essential documents including the annals and books from the library, which can now be found at Douai Abbey in Berkshire and the Carmelite convent in Baltimore.

ii. Historiography

In the early twentieth century, the scholarly focus on the early modern period was on the impact and spread of the Protestant Reformation, centred on politics and male players. In the last thirty years, historians have started to address this imbalance with research on the Catholic or Counter-Reformation, with a particular focus upon women. This plethora of work on the

[6] Quoted by Nicky Hallett, *Lives of Spirit: English Carmelite Self-Writing of the Early Modern Period* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013), 9.

Catholic world after the Reformation considers the reconfiguration of the Church, reform of religious orders, missionary work in the New World, and control of reform through the Inquisition. Within this scholarship are significant studies on the early modern convent. The literature on English convents was made more accessible after Caroline Bowden received a grant to create the database, "Who Were the Nuns?", which resulted in numerous projects and studies on English communities.[7] This research on the convent has covered a wide range of topics, including the effects of the Council of Trent (1545-63) on conventual life, politics, music, art, spirituality, architecture, patronage, education, and life-writing. These studies also cover several women's religious communities in Italy, Germany, France, Spain, and locales of English exile. This scholarship shows that experiences varied greatly for early modern nuns across the continent. Engagement with the religious, political and economic change that characterised the early modern world ranged from those of the aristocratic, institutionally political Italian cloisters incorporated into the political fabric of their towns and cities to those convents that were fractured and endured Protestant Reformations in Germany, the Low Countries, England, and to a lesser extent, in France. Throughout this thesis, I will consider relevant historiography in more depth in each chapter. In this introduction, I want to explore more generally how the scholarship on these different geographical areas is moving towards more nuanced arguments about early modern nuns' spirituality.

Italian scholarship is primarily focused on aristocratic family connections made through convents. These studies discuss how daughters and dowries were often pawns in patriarchal

[7] Who were the Nuns? (hereafter WWTN), https://wwtn.history.qmul.ac.uk/; Caroline Bowden and James. E. Kelly, ed., *The English Convents in Exile, 1600-1800: Communities, Culture and Identity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013); Marie-Louise Coolahan, "Identity Politics and Nuns' Writing," *Women's Writing* 14, no. 2 (2007): 306-320.

religious and secular politics.[8] Italian convents maintained the social and cultural importance of performing rank, power and wealth, despite strict enclosure. Preserving ties of dynastic wealth also meant that Italian nuns could focus on acts of patronage and artistic endeavours.[9] Studies on music in Italian convents have shown that engaging in the arts had cultural and political influence while also being a vital aspect of nuns' devotional practice.[10] Colleen Reardon's work on Sienese convents posits the nuns freely engaging in musical pursuits,

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[8] Arcangela Tarabotti, *Paternal Tyranny,* trans. Letizia Panizza (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Helen Hills, *Invisible City: The Architecture of Devotion in Seventeenth Century Neapolitan Convents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Sharon T. Strocchia, "Women on the Edge: Madness, Possession, and Suicide in Early Modern Convents," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 45, no. 1 (2015): 53-77; Silvia Evangelisti, *Nuns: A History of Convent Life, 1450-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); K. J. P. Lowe, *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture in Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[9] Jutta Sperling, *Convents and the Body Politic in Late Renaissance Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Sharon T. Strocchia, *Nuns and Nunneries in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Silvia Evangelisti, "Arts and the Advent of Clausura: The Convent of Saint Catherine in Tridentine Florence," in *Suora Pautilla Nelli (1523-1588): The First Woman Painter in Florence*, ed. Jonathan Nelson (Florence: Cadmo, 2000), 67-82; Mary Laven, *Virgins of Venice: Broken Vows and Cloistered Lives in the Renaissance Convent* (New York: Viking, 2003).

[10] Robert L. Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens: Nuns and Their Music in Early Modern Milan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Ann E. Matter and John Coakley, ed. *Creative Women in Medieval and Early Modern Italy: A Religious and Artistic Renaissance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994); Craig Monson, ed. *The Crannied Wall: Women, Religion, and the Arts in Early Modern Europe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992); Craig Monson, *Disembodied Voices: Music and Culture in an Early Modern Italian Convent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Laurie Stras, *Women and Music in Sixteenth-Century Ferrara* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Kimberlyn Montford, "Convent Music: An Examination," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Allyson M. Poska, Jane Couchman and Katherine A. McIver (London: Routledge, 2016), 75-93.

through writing and making music. This musical expression of devotion led the convent in Siena to become an essential cultural centre supported by the lay community and its clergy.[11] Similarly, while Helen Hills argues that nuns continued to place importance on secular aristocratic possessions, that same evidence presented an intriguing view into how the nuns shaped their own identities and spirituality through space. Italian Dominican inventories describe nuns adapting spaces within the hallways and rooms of the convent, creating altars and chapels for personal spiritual practice.[12] Despite the scholarship's initial focus on forced enclosure and aristocratic family dynasties, convent archives provide further insight into nuns' lives, showing that women were able to shape their identities and most certainly had historical agency. The Italian scholarship shows how nuns' creative pursuits and experiences can be analysed to reveal a more nuanced understanding of their spirituality in terms of their social and political lives.

German and French convent scholarship is starkly different from the Italian. Both areas underwent religious, political, and societal upheaval during the early modern period. The German convents were less interested in dynastic rule, instead attempting to survive and adapt under the religious changes brought about by the Protestant Reformation.[13] The French

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[11] Colleen Reardon, *Holy Concord Within Sacred Walls: Nuns and Music in Siena, 1575-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[12] Helen Hills, "The Housing of Institutional Architecture: Searching for a Domestic Holy in Post-Tridentine Italian Convents," in *Domestic Institutional Interiors in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Sandra Cavallo and Silvia Evangelisti (Farnharm: Ashgate, 2009), 119-133.

[13] For a literary history on German nuns see Charlotte Woodford, *Nuns as Historians in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002). For more on the convents during the Reformation and intellectual production see, Merry E. Wiesner, *Gender, Church, and State in Early Modern Germany: Essays* (London: Longman, 1997); Frances E. Dolan, "English, Women, Writing, Catholicism," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 31, no.

convents adapted to new forms of religious practice through the education of lay children, practicing charity, and developing further forms of active apostolate.[14] Amy Leonard seeks to answer how German nuns survived the Reformation. Her book argues that the Dominican convents in evangelised Strasbourg persevered through forced Protestant conversion and mandatory Lutheran sermons by holding onto their Catholic identity. Nuns maintained this through wilful law-breaking, politically using their relationships as daughters and sisters to Strasbourg's elite, claiming their gender rendered them too weak and stupid to learn the new theology and yet proving themselves useful in continuing to educate young girls.[15] Barbara Diefendorf's book on French convents in Paris is an essential study that shows how the nuns founded and led religious communities that organised innovative forms of charity to the poor. An essential factor in these nuns' spiritual lives was the effect on identity and devotional practice of the religious wars and the peace that came after.[16] Elizabeth Rapley's *The Dévotes*

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2 (2012): 237-244. For musical pursuits see, Barbara Eichner, "Sweet Singing in Three Voices: A Musical Source from a South German Convent?", *Early Music* 39, no. 3 (2011): 335-348.

[14] Carol Baxter, "Women, Religious Conviction and the Subversive Use of Power," *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 31, no. 2 (2009): 111-121; Susan E. Dinan, "Spheres of Female Religious Expression in Early Modern France," in *Women and Religion in Old and New Worlds,* ed. Susan E. Dinan and Debra Meyers (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 71-92; Nicholas Paige, *Writing Interiority: Some Speculations on Gender and Autobiographical Authority in Seventeenth-Century French Mysticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[15] Amy Leonard, *Nails in the Wall: Catholic Nuns in Reformation Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). Similarly, Ulrike Strasser argues how the Catholic Church in Germany redefined gender roles during the Reformation, focusing on the virginal female body and how they used it to harness spiritual authority in *State of Virginity: Gender, Religion, and Politics in an Early Modern Catholic State* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

[16] Barbara Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and Catholic Reformation in Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

studies the uncloistered religious lay women in early modern France. Taking adapted vows and forming confraternities such as the Congrégation of Notre Dame, they worked "in the world" educating girls and administering charity to the poor and aid to the ill. Their existence went against the strict call for enclosure under Tridentine law, but the women persevered. Rapley argues that by the 1700s, the *dévotes* had "feminised" the church becoming at least tolerable to local clergy.[17] Rapley's study chooses not to address contemporary hagiography, or spiritual texts which would have given further insight into acceptable feminine piety, thereby strengthening her argument on the French experience. The studies on German and French convents follow similar patterns to the Italian despite the different religious landscapes. Agency, identity, gender, and politics feature in the debate about nuns as historical actors within the broader Reformation context.

Early modern Spanish scholarship has a greater focus on spirituality. This emphasis is due to the reformation of Spanish religious orders towards contemplative and missionising goals.[18] Two reformers have substantial research on their respective spiritualities, St Teresa of Avila (Teresa of Jesus, 1515-1582) and the Discalced Carmelites, as well as St Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) and the Society of Jesus. Studies of Spanish spirituality argue that texts present a gendered rhetoric, or as Alison Weber noted of Teresa of Avila, they adopted a "rhetoric of

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[17] Elizabeth Rapley, *The Dévotes: Women and Church in Seventeenth-Century France* (Montreal: MQUP, 1990).

[18] Marta V. Vicente and Luis R. Corteguera, ed. *Women, Texts, and Authority in the Early Modern Spanish World* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2003); P. Renee Baernstein, *A Convent Tale: A Century of Sisterhood in Spanish Milan* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 2-4; Asuncion Lavrin, "The Role of the Nunneries in the Economy of New Spain in the Eighteenth Century," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 46, no. 4 (1966): 371-393; Elizabeth Lehfeldt, *Religious Women in Golden Age Spain: The Permeable Cloister* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

femininity".[19] Like the Italian scholarship, studies have focused on the power structures within Spanish religious culture and how nuns operated and pushed the boundaries of enclosed life. Teresa's documented spirituality had to exist within the limitations set by her male superiors, but in so doing, she uncovered flexibility and built a powerful personal identity as a mystic and a reformer. Recently, Silvia Evangelisti has developed this argument further, positing that the biographies of Spanish mystics reveal previously ignored aspects of female mysticism relating to ideas of change and conversion. She suggests that "analogous narratives are replicated in the biographies of […] female mystics that represent them as active agents of Christianization."[20] Mystics such as María de Jesús de Agreda (1602-1665) appeared in the New World, miraculously transported by God from Spain, preaching to, and often instantaneously converting, the indigenous peoples. In the Spanish examples, biography is vital to the acceptance of women's mysticism. The women in Evangelisti's study had their mystical experiences discerned and documented by men, thus circumventing Teresa's struggle with writing her own experience and submitting it for approval. Spanish studies on mysticism have shown that even hagiographical texts and accounts of religious enthusiasm are legitimate sources for discovering women's roles in the Catholic Reformation.

Research on English convents differs to that on continental convents. English nuns had the experience of exile; women left their families to practice their religion in strange lands and pray for the return of Catholicism at home. Ignored in historical scholarship which focused on

[19] Alison Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Jodi Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); Gillian T. W. Ahlgren, *Teresa of Avila and the Politics of Sanctity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

[20] Silvia Evangelisti, "Religious Women, Mystic Journeys and Agency in Early Modern Spain," *Journal of Early Modern History* 22, no. 1-2 (2018): 17.

Protestantism, the importance of English nuns was brought to the forefront by Claire Walker. In her book, *Gender and Politics,* Walker argues that contemplative convents played a formidable role as outposts for the Catholic struggle against the Protestant government. Despite being enclosed nuns on the continent, they used their position in safety to organise patronage networks with fellow exiles and those working in England. Further, Walker shows how the nuns fought similar battles against the Catholic Church in terms of enclosure and clerical authority. She points to issues concerning the spiritual path convents were taking, such as a major dispute within the Brussels Benedictine convent over their spiritual direction. Their argument was similar to the Carmelites as they fought for their right to have access to the spiritual director of their choice.[21] Walker's insight into how gender and politics play a role in English convents is influential to the arguments made in this thesis. Additionally, her more current research, analysing how the English Carmelites' devotion was embodied through material goods such as relics has been integral to my work with emotions methodologies.[22] Studies on English nuns gained further traction after WWTN was published. Intellectual production has been a dominant focus, with multiple studies showing how exiled Catholic

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[21] The Benedictine convent's argument differs from the Carmelites because internal factions were made with some nuns asking for Jesuit directors and while others preferred members of the secular clergy. Claire Walker, *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English Convents in France and the Low Countries* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

[22] Claire Walker, "'Hangd for the true faith': Embodied Devotion in Early Modern English Carmelite Cloisters," (forthcoming, *Journal of Religious History,* 2021); "The Experience of Exile in Early Modern English Convents," *Parergon* 34, no. 2 (2017): 159-177; "The Embodiment of Exile: Relics and Suffering in Early Modern English Cloisters," in *Feeling Exclusion: Religious Conflict, Exile and Emotions in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Giovanni Tarantino and Charles Zika (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), 81-99.

women used authorship to form their identities and establish themselves in foreign cities as forces for good.[23]

Despite the extensive research made so far, little is said about the spirituality of English nuns.[24] For the most part, the English scholarship has discussed nuns' spirituality as a background aspect to conventual life. Scholars have argued that Benedictine nuns like Barbara Constable, Gertrude More, and Catherine Gascoigne wrote about their mysticism as a form of spiritual authority and published their writing as models of mystical piety.[25] These arguments

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[23] Jenna D. Lay, "The Literary Lives of Nuns: Crafting identities Through Exile," in *The English Convents in Exile, 1600-1800: Communities, Culture and Identity,* ed. Caroline Bowden and James E. Kelly (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013): 71-86; Caroline Bowden, "'A Distribution of Tyme': Reading and Writing Practices in the English Convents in Exile," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 31, no. ½ (2012): 99-116; Ken Jackson and Arthur F. Marotti, "The Turn to Religion in Early Modern English Studies," *Criticism* 46, no. 1 (2004): 167-190; Heather Wolfe, "Reading Bells and Loose Papers: Reading and Writing Practices of the English Benedictine Nuns of Cambrai and Paris," in *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Writing: Selected Papers from the Trinity/Trent Colloquium,* ed. Victoria E. Burke and Jonathan Gibson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 135-156.

[24] Although there are excellent papers included in Laurence Lux-Sterritt and Carmen M. Mangion, ed., *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality: Women and the Roman Catholic Church in Britain and Europe, 1200-1900* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). Especially see those written by Jenna Lay, Querciolo Mazzonis and Marit Monteiro.

[25] Caroline Bowden, "Patronage and Practice: Assessing the Significance of the English Convents as Cultural Centres in Flanders in the Seventeenth Century," *English Studies* 92, no. 5 (2011): 483-495; Heather Wolfe, "Dame Barbara Constable: Catholic Antiquarian, Advisor, and Closet Missionary," in *Catholic Culture in Early Modern England*, ed. Ronald Corthell, Frances E. Dolan, Christopher Highley and Arthur F. Marotti (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 158-188; Wolfe, "Reading Bells"; Victoria Van Hyning, "Augustine Baker: Discerning the 'Call' and Fashioning Dead Disciples," in *Angels of Light? Sanctity and the Discernment of Spirits in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Clare Copeland and Jan Machielsen (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 143-168; Walker, *Gender and Politics*; and Dorothy L. Latz, "The Mystical Poetry of Dame Gertrude More," *Mystics Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (1990): 66-82.

discuss the effect Augustine Baker's spiritual method had on the nuns and how they used it within their communities to form identity and gain authority. When I analyse spirituality, I want to consider what the mystical experience was, how and why it was remembered, documented, and how it affected the individual and the community. The current research on English nuns is still pertinent to this study because the arguments are not mutually exclusive. These questions need to be considered within the context of identity, gender, and politics. Three scholars who influence this approach to spirituality are Nicky Hallett, Nancy Bradley Warren and Laurence Lux-Sterritt.[26] Hallett has studied the English Carmelites' construction of textual and sensual communities through numerous books and articles, focusing mainly on the Carmelite community at Lierre.[27] In *Lives of Spirit*, Hallett documents nuns' life writing in the

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[26] And to a lesser extent, the recent article by Liam Temple. Temple has countered the Benedictine practice of mysticism with the experiences of the English Poor Clares, who left little to no descriptive account of mystical experiences. He argues that the Poor Clares used mysticism as a form of identity poverty, stating that "the process of self-abnegation and purification not only prepared the soul of each individual nun for the presence of God within but also laid the groundwork for a harmonious convent community which was focused entirely on perfecting spiritual devotions." Their mystical practice was grounded on the Franciscan ideals of humility and poverty. Temple posits that by removing the author and focusing on the community as a whole in their mysticism, "an additional form of poverty could be found in relinquishing their own individual identities." Despite the lack of individual accounts of mysticism, Temple has shown how little explored communities can be further understood through their mystical practices. Liam Temple, "Mysticism and Identity among the English Poor Clares," *Church History* 88, no. 3 (2019): 652.

[27] Hallett's works on English Carmelites include: *Witchcraft, Exorcism, and the Politics of Possession in a Seventeenth-Century Convent: 'How Sister Ursula was once bewiched and Sister Margaret Twice,'* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); "Paradise Postponed: The Nationhood of Nuns in the 1670s," in *Religion, Culture and National Community in the 1670s*, ed. Tony Claydon and Thomas Corns (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), 10-34; "Philip Sidney in the Cloister: The Reading Habits of English Nuns in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp," *Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies* 12, no. 3 (2012): 88-116; "So Short a Space of Time: Early Modern

annals from Antwerp and Lierre. This work presents a general overview of the convents before the annals were made more widely available through the *English Convents in Exile, 1600-1800* series.[28] More pertinent to this thesis is Hallett's discussion of the nuns' understanding and experience of the senses.[29] She shows how the early modern understanding of the senses is reflected in the nuns' writing, positing that nuns had an embodied comprehension of the spiritual. Similarly, Warren argues in the introduction to her book that the framing of the Antwerp annals around the miraculous incorrupt body of a nun created a historical narrative for the convent based on the embodied and spiritual.[30] Beginning with this example of the Carmelites, Warren studies the extended connections between medieval and early modern religious women and the interplay of textual, affective, and sensual communities through spirituality. Warren's book is significant as it shows the potential of analysing spiritual writing to obtain a more nuanced understanding of conventual life and communities. Laurence Lux-Sterritt, like Walker, has begun to use emotions methodologies to understand the nuns' spiritual experiences. Lux-Sterritt's book on the Benedictines at Cambrai, Paris, and four other convents, extends the current scholarship to first consider the nuns' goal of death to the world. This spiritual goal is key to contemplative practices but had yet to be analysed so thoroughly in the English experience. Again, devotion becomes embodied as nuns paradoxically made themselves "dead to the world" through physical analogies and metaphors.[31] Lux-Sterritt does

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Convent Chronology and Carmelite Spirituality," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 42 (2012): 539-66.

[28] Hallett, *Lives of Spirit.*

[29] Nicky Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities, 1600-1800: Early Modern 'Convents of Pleasure'* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

[30] Nancy Bradley Warren, *Embodied Word: Female Spiritualties, Contested Orthodoxies, and English Religious Cultures, 1350-1700* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

[31] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*.

this by using the emotions methodology of “emotional communities.” This book is essential as it shows how an emotion, such as the divine love of God, can be analysed and revealed as playing an integral role in how nuns understood themselves and their sisters.

The common factor across this scholarship is the focus of power within the nuns’ lives and communities. Considering that early modern nuns were not traditionally seen as significant agents, uncovering how nuns engaged politically was crucial to changing this perception. The current scholarship has achieved this goal through multiple angles, including cultural, social, political, intellectual, and literary analysis. Work on spirituality, on the other hand, has only begun. Research has shown that nuns were constantly navigating the restrictions placed by the Counter-Reformation church and early modern society. One tool available to nuns in testing the boundaries and building agency was their devotion. I want to show how nuns’ spirituality affected their political authority as they cultivated mystical individual and communal identities that challenged Church authority. I will strengthen the current research on early modern nuns’ spirituality by advancing the use of history of emotions methodologies begun in the research of Walker and Lux-Sterritt. This thesis will contribute to this scholarship by closely analysing the English Carmelites, who have been under-explored compared to other English orders like the Benedictines. It will draw upon the methodological insights of several historians of emotions to examine how early modern women experienced and understood religious life and how they worked within the power and gender structures of seventeenth-century society.

iii. Methodology and Structure of Study

The history of emotions has grown considerably from Lucien Febvre’s sixty-year-old call for the consideration of feeling in history into an expanding field with research centres and evolving methodologies. Once overlooked in the history of politics, war, religion, and the law,

emotions now constitute a legitimate field of research.[32] Emerging from the field of cultural studies, emotional experience has been evaluated through social and cultural contexts. Peter and Carol Stearns posited that "emotional standards" are set in societies, typically through popular media, which regulate and maintain people's "appropriate" emotional responses.[33] William Reddy argues that these emotional standards exist as part of an "emotional regime." The dominant group in society maintains these emotional norms, with those who cannot conform eventually experiencing "emotional suffering." Due to the nature of human beings, experience is not monolithic. Therefore, these minorities create "emotional refuges" in which more acceptable emotional responses can be practiced.[34] Barbara Rosenwein goes further, positing the creation of "emotional communities." According to her work, emotional norms are not inherently oppressive, and people belong to multiple spheres of emotional standards in their society, which they move between and adapt to accordingly. Acceptable emotional responses might change between the home, the tavern, and the courtroom, for example.[35] Ben Anderson's methodology continues this focus on the community but moves towards how groups understand emotion in the ambiguous space between called "affective atmospheres." Anderson argues that atmospheres "are impersonal in that they belong to collective situations and can be

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[32] Barbara Rosenwein, "Worrying About Emotions," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 821-845; Pioneering research into emotions methodology includes, Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, "Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards," *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (1985): 813-836.

[33] Stearns and Stearns, "Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions," 813.

[34] William H. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[35] Barbara Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions, 600-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

felt as intensely personal. On this account atmospheres are spatially discharged affective qualities that are autonomous from the bodies that they emerge from, enable and perish with."[36] Anderson deliberately made this conceptualisation of space and emotion vague. Nonetheless, the concept is useful to understand more abstract understanding of emotion within space. Finally, Monique Scheer proposes that the theory of practice, as expounded by Pierre Bourdieu, could be used to explain individual experiences of religious emotions. Scheer's "emotional practices" can bridge the persistent dichotomies of body and mind, expression and experience, and structure and agency.[37] Building upon Bourdieu's *habitus*, emotions in religion become socially situated, trained, plastic, adaptive, and historical.[38] Emotions are not just generated through religious practice but also emerge from "bodily dispositions conditioned by a social context, which always has cultural and historical specificity."[39] Particular religious emotions, such as weeping or rapture, can be learned, practiced, and are shaped by both the practitioner and their environment. How Reddy, Rosenwein, Anderson, and Scheer explain their methods will be discussed further in each chapter.

I am using multiple methodologies in this thesis because they were not created in a vacuum but diverged from one another to facilitate debates between differing sources, conceptualisations, and arguments. Although current studies often choose to focus on one method, the history of emotions has a shared heritage. Rosenwein's concept of "emotional

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[36] Ben Anderson has since expanded on his concept of affective atmospheres in, *Encountering Affect: Capacities, Apparatuses, Conditions* (Routledge: Abingdon, 2016); "Affective Atmospheres," *Emotion, Space and Society* 2 (2009): 80.

[37] Monique Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice? (And is that What Makes them have a History?)," *History and Theory* 51, no. 2 (2012): 194.

[38] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 201-202.

[39] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 193.

communities" was the most accessible method for me when I began this thesis. I had previously considered shared emotional norms through textual communities and found this applied well to the Antwerp annals. The collected volume of obituaries is a textual community that includes multiple, converging narratives of different groups. I chose this method for the first chapter to explain the effect that the interplay of these communities, and their shared emotional norms, had on the unique mystical experiences in the Antwerp convent. I define these communities by framing an institutional dispute between the Carmelite nuns and friars that became foundational to the convent's emotional community. Various people with conflicting opinions were embroiled in this dispute. Exploring these groups, their emotional norms and how they were used in the narrative of the annals will show how the convent's emotional communities formed the social and political foundation for the nuns' mysticism.

I will extend the use of emotional communities in the second chapter, focusing on a specific textual and communal group, the spiritual methods the nuns practiced. This community is part of both Carmelite and Ignatian spiritual practice, which featured in the dispute socially and politically, but the two emotional communities also played a significant role in the nuns' practice of mysticism. That is why I chose to engage with Scheer's "emotional practices" in order to drill down into their texts, focusing on the practical ways nuns worked on regulating and cultivating the emotions that fuelled their mysticism. While Chapter Two compares how nuns learned spiritual methods and the ways those lessons influenced their practices, the third chapter looks at one particular emotional practice – reading. To understand how reading and emotion are connected, Reddy's terms "emotives" and "navigation of feeling" will be deployed. I will consider how the Church and the convent established "emotional regimes" and how the nuns' library became a necessary tool for performing the emotional work needed to regulate and alleviate "emotional suffering." Finally, the fourth chapter will consider these previous emotional aspects with Anderson's "affective atmospheres" as they permeated and

shaped convent space. Within the context of the previous chapters, Chapter Four demonstrates how emotion was an essential influence on convent space and a tool shaping the nuns' transformative emotional practice. The cultivated affectivity of the space affected the nuns.

This thesis is grounded in two principal sources, the Antwerp annals and the convent's library. My study aims to assess how mysticism was understood, nurtured, and functioned in an early modern convent from an individual and communal perspective. By applying the differing, yet connected, analytical lenses represented by various emotions methodologies, I posit that a more nuanced understanding can be extracted through focusing on a small set of similarly connected texts. My methodology involves reading the same text multiple times for different words, practices, events, and genres of writing. Repeated reading and analysis ensure that more evidence is included from multiple perspectives, presenting a broader understanding of a sophisticated, and purposeful spiritual writing. Conversely, the same piece of evidence may change meaning when analysed using an alternative method. This can also show how spiritual writing is ambiguous and, perhaps, is made so intentionally. Nonetheless, using several, associated methodologies also reflects the composite narrative in my sources. By using more than one across this thesis, I am taking advantage of this connectivity to give a robust and nuanced argument that considers the different ways emotions worked in a mystical space.

iv. Sources

The main primary source for this study is the first volume of the Antwerp annals. In this thesis, I will be referring to the published version of the copy held in Antwerp City Archives

(*FelixArchief*).[40] I could not travel to Antwerp during my candidature but have been able to verify the published version, edited by Katrien Daemon-de Gelder.[41] It is a meticulous edition and includes original page numbers, spelling, and two of the illustrations. As a document, the annals served as a chronicle or history of the convent. It is organised by the obituaries of the nuns who professed in Antwerp, while asserting critical historical events, opinions, and anecdotes. As a source, it presents several complexities that need to be considered during any analysis of its contents. The annals were compiled over one hundred years after the convent's foundation as a consequence of finding the incorrupt corpse of Mary Wake. The public's thirst for information on such a pious woman played a role in how the annals were compiled. The nuns included devotional diaries, autobiographical accounts, letters, papers on meditations, oral histories, and commissioned portraits of notable nuns. The reason for the annals' compilation – the discovery of the miraculous body – reinforced the convent as a site of spiritual perfection. It served to assert to the public the nuns' piety and significance as religious exiles in a foreign country, proving it was not a burden on the city of Antwerp but an asset. Meanwhile, it also served as a tool of edification within the convent. In this context, it can be assumed that the annals use mysticism as a narrative frame in the history of the convent and this thesis will seek to show this and explain why.

The individual documents used to compile the annals also present different issues of narrative and purpose. As Hallett has noted, the Carmelite nuns used the authority of St Teresa of Avila's writing to inform their own. Further, they were often compelled to write by their

[40] Manuscript of English Theresians: Monastery Chronicle, with List of Biographies, copied and compiled by Sister Mary Joseph, 1724, KK#1018, English Theresians, *FelixArchief*, Antwerp, Belgium. https://felixarchief.antwerpen.be/archievenoverzicht/562108.

[41] "Short Colections".

confessors as a spiritual practice to "forget oneself" in the process of spiritual annihilation.[42] Hallett surmises that "the Lives are constructed, therefore, in a context of concentrated mental discipline in which past lives are less significant than present meditative concern," and further that "individual memories are sometimes reshaped in the light of previous or subsequent realizations, or explained in the face of dialogue with other religious or with spiritual directors."[43] Thus, through its conception and construction, it is already noticeable how and why mysticism plays a vital role in the convent narrative. It should be noted that the annals are of hagiographic nature, in which the lives and stories were all designed to connect the community as a whole (past, present and future). In this narrative, there would inevitably be devices, people, and incidents which challenged unity and served to bring the nuns together even more closely. For example, in the dispute with the friars, I must acknowledge that Anne Worsley and Mary Birbeck might have framed the men in a more negative light because they were considered "other." Nonetheless, the explicitly mystical origins for the annals' composition perhaps explains the atypical descriptions of mystical experiences it features. While this was a catalyst for the creation of the book, it does not explicate why mysticism was so central to lived experience within the convent over the previous one hundred years. By using this source, my study intends to uncover how nuns during the course of the proceeding century understood mysticism.

Beyond the Antwerp annals, I will be using other literary manuscripts and books that belonged to the convent or were described explicitly in the annals. Chapter Two includes analysis of select spiritual writing by St Teresa of Avila and St Ignatius of Loyola. These will be used to compare and contrast their influence on the nuns' spiritual writing. How they sought to emulate the saints is essential to understanding the nuns' experiences of mysticism and how

[42] Hallett, *Lives of Spirit*, 27.

[43] Hallett, *Lives of Spirit*, 27.

they recorded them. Chapter Three will use the library collection from Antwerp, now held by Douai Abbey, to analyse further the literary and spiritual influences on the nuns and show how reading was essential to their practice of mysticism. Both chapters present obvious challenges in the sources used, especially the use of library books. The nuns did not leave behind a detailed inventory; thus, it is not possible to determine when individual books were acquired nor where they were kept or who read them. Despite this, these were commonly used spiritual guides and it is possible to discern their influence in nuns' writing and visions.[44] Both chapters will include literary analysis of the texts and how I intend to use them.

v. Conclusion

The argument this thesis advances is that emotion played a vital role in the experience of mysticism in the seventeenth-century English Carmelite convent in Antwerp. By focusing on emotion words, emotives and emotionality within the Antwerp annals' narrative I will show why the Carmelites were distinctive in their practice of mysticism compared to other English convents. The unique combination of political, social, spiritual and individual circumstances that shaped this community over one hundred years, led to its officially sanctioned practice of emotionally charged and transformative mystical visions that permeated the physical space. Ghosts, saints, and Christ himself were called upon by mystical practitioners in times of extreme emotion for relief and comfort. During a time of religious upheaval, sickness, and uncertainty, mysticism was more than an individual's fantastic dream or theological device. For the Carmelite nuns in Antwerp, mysticism was a distinctly emotional tool for identity and agency.

[44] For typical guidebooks across convents see, Caroline Bowden, "Patronage and Practice".

Chapter 1

Mapping Convent Emotions Through Institutional Dispute

> To the end that those present and those who shall follow may be animated with the Primitive Spirit and fervour courageously to follow the examples of these their predecessors who Successively have by their heroick vertues maintaind the first Observance of our Glorious Mother St Teresa and renderd this Monastery Singularly remarkable for love Charity and union amongst themselves great tenderness compassion and care towards the Sick, Obedience Submission and loving respect to Superiours, aversion to the least propriety intire dependance on Divine Providence and preserverant constancy in the Practices of our Holy Mother, even to the least things all which our first Superiour Rd Mother Ann of the Ascension took from the Companions of St Teresa under whom she was professd and lived Severall years[1]

Heroic virtue, spirit, fervour, love, charity, union, tenderness, compassion, care, obedience, submission, loving respect, and perseverance were a list words written by Mary Birbeck (Mary Francis of St Teresa, 1674-1733), the first compiler of the Antwerp annals, which she used to frame the convent's emotional community. The annals communicated not just the emotional values of past sisters but also instructed the future members of their community, those "courageous" enough to join them and take up these principles. Similar to Barbara Rosenwein's twelfth-century Cistercian abbot of Rievaulx Abbey, Aelred's, writings, the annals served as an edifying didactic text.[2] Although compiled one hundred years after the foundation of the convent, the texts collected within were saved across that century. The "ancients" of the

[1] "Short Colections," 3.

[2] Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling*, 88-143.

community shared further stories through oral history. Therefore, the annals can give a good indication of the seventeenth-century cloister's emotional community, or communities. The annals did not just focus on the nuns' spiritual lives, their struggles and triumphs of devotion, but also detailed private moments in their daily lives. Despite the spiritual goal of interiority and "death" to the world, the nuns had meaningful and jovial friendships with each other. The examples in this chapter show that the convent community did not operate in isolation but intersected with a number of emotional communities. These interactions shaped the Antwerp nuns' identity and emotional styles.

By exploring a constitutional dispute between the nuns and the friars of their order, the complex emotional communities that made up the convent become evident. The communities' shared norms and emotional differences were tested and torn by the factional nature of the argument. By its conclusion, more groups had been dragged into the conversation, including the pope. These communities influenced the development of the emotional style of the convent. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the intersecting emotional communities of the Antwerp convent.[3] It will show how the nuns' relationships shaped the convent's identity and emotional style. This identity is essential for understanding the emotional dimension of mystical experiences in subsequent chapters. Analysing the seventeenth-century Carmelites through emotion is not entirely new. Nicky Hallett and Nancy Bradley Warren both touch upon emotion, the senses, and community in their studies, although they do not use history of

[3] Scholarship does exist on convents and intersecting communities looking at the social, political and cultural connections rather than emotional, see Claire Walker, "Crumbs of News: Early Modern English Nuns and Royalist Intelligence Networks," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2012): 635-655; "Prayer, Patronage, and Political Conspiracy: English Nuns and the Restoration," *The Historical Journal* 43, no. 1 (2000): 1-23; *Gender and Politics*; Bowden, "Patronage and Practice"; Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa*; and Montford, "Within and Without".

emotions theories. Warren frames the introduction of her book around the discovery of Margaret Wake's (Mary Margaret of the Angels, 1617-1678) miraculous incorrupt body in 1718, and the historical narrative built by that event's influence.[4] Although Hallett also uses the Antwerp annals in her research, she focuses on Antwerp's sister convent in Lierre, to consider community and identity but with little reference to emotions.[5] In her book on the senses, Hallett engages with early modern sensory theories to understand what it meant, as a seventeenth-century Carmelite nun, to be alive and, metaphorically, dead in an enclosed convent.[6] Hallett's research is a thorough analysis of the nuns' self-writing and gives an insight into contemporary understandings of the passions and embodiment, while exploring their effect on individual experience in the convent. Similarly, Warren's study analyses how religious women created textual, sensual, and affective communities, past and present, through their manuscripts and spiritual writings. She persuasively argues that "suffering human bodies" intersect with "the textual corpus, and the corporate bodies of monastic communities" in a complex relationship of "bodies and texts, past and presents, selves and others, that run through writings and devotional practices."[7] Warren's research is essential for this thesis as it reinforces the significant influence of the convent's annals in the nuns' lives, and establishes the chronicle as a viable source for understanding the emotional landscape of the convent. Both Hallett's and Warren's books point to the potential for an analysis grounded in emotions. This chapter builds

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[4] Warren, *Embodied Word*.

[5] Hallett, *Lives of Spirit*; "Philip Sidney in the Cloister"; "So Short a Space of Time".

[6] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*"; Wietse de Boer also uses the senses to analyse religious experience in: "The Temptation of the Senses at the Sacro Monte di Varallo," in *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler (Boston: Brill, 2013), 393-451.

[7] Warren, *Embodied Word*, 13 and 7.

upon their research using the Antwerp annals to explore the individual's experience of embodiment within the community.

One scholar who has applied emotions concepts is Laurence Lux-Sterritt who invokes Rosenwein's emotional communities in her research on the English Benedictine nuns. Lux-Sterritt, like Warren and Hallett, considers emotion in the Benedictine nuns' spiritual-writing to understand their lived experience.[8] Although she deploys Rosenwein's "emotional communities" as her chosen methodology, Lux-Sterritt does not consistently use the terminology. She broadly looks at the emotional communities in the convent but does not discuss their interconnectivity. Her book focuses on individuals and the prescriptive textual works that influenced the nuns' understanding of emotions. Rosenwein's method places a lot of emphasis on textual communities as the defining characteristic of the emotional community. This chapter will expand upon this by explicitly naming, organising, and exploring the differing communities that shaped the convent's emotional style.[9] Lux-Sterritt's research informs this chapter through its discussion of emotion which considers enclosure, identity shaping and spiritual disunity.[10] She asserts that spirituality was both a spiritual and political choice,

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[8] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*.

[9] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages,* 1-16.

[10] Lux-Sterritt discusses how the Brussels house had a conflict amongst the nuns, whether they were pro-Jesuit or instead resented the Jesuit influence and preferred Augustine Baker's (1575-1641) spiritualty. She effectively analyses the conflict through emotion words showing how a dispute like this could disintegrate a close community. But shows how the convent is able to rebuild itself as a unified emotional community. *English Benedictine Nuns*, 144. Walker discusses the role of disputes in forming community identity in "An Ordered Cloister? Dissenting Passions in Early Modern English Cloisters," in *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder*, ed. Susan Broomhall (London: Routledge, 2015), 197-214.

aligning female and male orders.[11] Lux-Sterritt argues that the historiography has been "blind to nuns as individuals and their personal, embodied experience of the sacred."[12] She shows how considering emotional scripts and how individuals respond to them might offer a more nuanced understanding of contemplative life.

The Carmelites as a community have also been a subject of research for J.P. Vander Motten and Katrien Daemon-de Gelder. Their work uses the Antwerp annals' interactions with lay people to explore Antwerp's cultural and social networks, including the patronage of English exiles Sir Tobie Matthew (1577-1655) and Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1623-1673).[13] Motten and Daemon-de Gelder present a detailed analysis of the role of the English Carmelite convent in seventeenth-century Antwerp's artistic production. This research demonstrates that, despite the convent's strict adherence to enclosure, intimate relationships evolved with those outside the community. My chapter builds upon their research to consider the impact of lay exiles on the convent and how they contributed to the nuns' emotional style. Although the scholarship on convents and their emotional communities is limited, these scholars have established the potential for analysing the ways emotion defined the Antwerp Carmelite community and how the nuns understood, ignored and revised the emotional regimes which sought to control their spiritual and daily lives. The Antwerp convent was at the intersection of several competing emotional communities both outside and within the cloister – ecclesiastical, secular and the nuns themselves.

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[11] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 252.

[12] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 253.

[13] J.P. Vander Motten and Katrien Daemon-de Gelder, "A Cloistered Entrepôt: Sir Tobie Matthew and the English Carmel in Antwerp," *English Studies* 92, no. 5 (2011): 548-61; "Margaret Cavendish, the Antwerp Carmel and The Convent of Pleasure," *Archiv fur das Stadium der Neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 251, no. 1 (2014): 134-45.

This chapter deploys Rosenwein's concept of "emotional communities". A consideration of emotional communities has been significant for understanding religious, social and cultural minority groups. It is a concept that theorises historical people lived in and travelled through a variety of relationship networks, or groups, that were more than economic or political, but also mental and emotional. These groups were varied in size, changed with time and place, and often overlapped because of shared norms or even despite their differences.[14] The seventeenth-century convent is no different from any other shared space, notwithstanding its "strict enclosure." To quote Rosenwein:

> These are precisely the same as social communities – families, neighborhoods, parliaments, guilds, monasteries, parish church memberships – but the researcher looking at them seeks to uncover above all systems of feeling: what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them; […] the nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognize; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate and deplore.[15]

The method is simple: to comb out the shape of emotional communities through shared emotion words, imagery, and communication. This simplicity has led to a large body of scholarship using the concept in multiple ways across various research topics. Although Rosenwein intended the methodology for early medieval research, its flexibility means researchers from early modern to contemporary times have found ways to implement it. Carolina Rodríguez-López and Daniel Ventura Herranz' use the concept of emotional communities to discuss the exiles of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). The exiles, including Américo Castro and Pedro

[14] Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling*, 314.

[15] Rosenwein, "Worrying About Emotions in History," 842.

Salinas, secured and built communities around their shared experience of suffering, in time finding contentment with each other in their new homes.[16] They wrote that "the exiles were forced to design their own emotional reconstruction, their new lives, not forgetting the old ones."[17] This article is essential for this thesis considering that the Carmelites were also exiles going through emotional reconstruction after joining an English convent on the continent, which existed not only to preserve English Catholic institutions but also to sustain their co-religionists spirituality through their prayer and transmission of reformed Catholic devotions.[18]

In this chapter, I will first discuss in detail the dispute between the nuns and friars as a case study modelling the overlapping emotional communities in the religious women's lives. The dispute provides evidence of the entangled communities that defined early modern convents despite strict post-Tridentine enclosure. Although the Council of Trent supposedly sought to eliminate emotionality in monastic orders' governance, especially in convents, every aspect of the dispute is marked by passionate responses, which were often conveyed via mystical experiences. The dispute was to play a critical role in the convent's history as well as their spiritual lives and writing. Convent accounts contrast the nuns emotionally to the friars and demonstrate how the religious women eventually gained the upper hand over the Carmelite men. A Papal Bull from Pope Gregory XV (1554-1623) in 1623 finally concluded the matter

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[16] Carolina Rodríguez-López and Daniel Ventura Herranz, "On Exiles and Emotions," *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea* 36 (2014): 113-138.

[17] Rodríguez-López and Herranz, "On Exiles and Emotions," 113.

[18] I also considered the excellent chapters on early modern exile included in Giovanni Tarantino and Charles Zika, ed., *Feeling Exclusion: Religious Conflict, Exile and Emotions in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2019). Further, Carmen M. Mangion explores emotional communities formed through religious suffering in, "'Why, would you have me live upon a gridiron?': Pain, Identity, and Emotional Communities in Nineteenth-Century English Convent Culture," *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 15 (2012) DOI: http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.652

in the nuns' favour. From then on, the Bishop of Antwerp governed the convent and supervised their ordinary confessors. After discussing the dispute, the chapter will use Rosenwein's methodology to explore the groups and individuals whose emotional styles and norms affected the convent's emotional community.

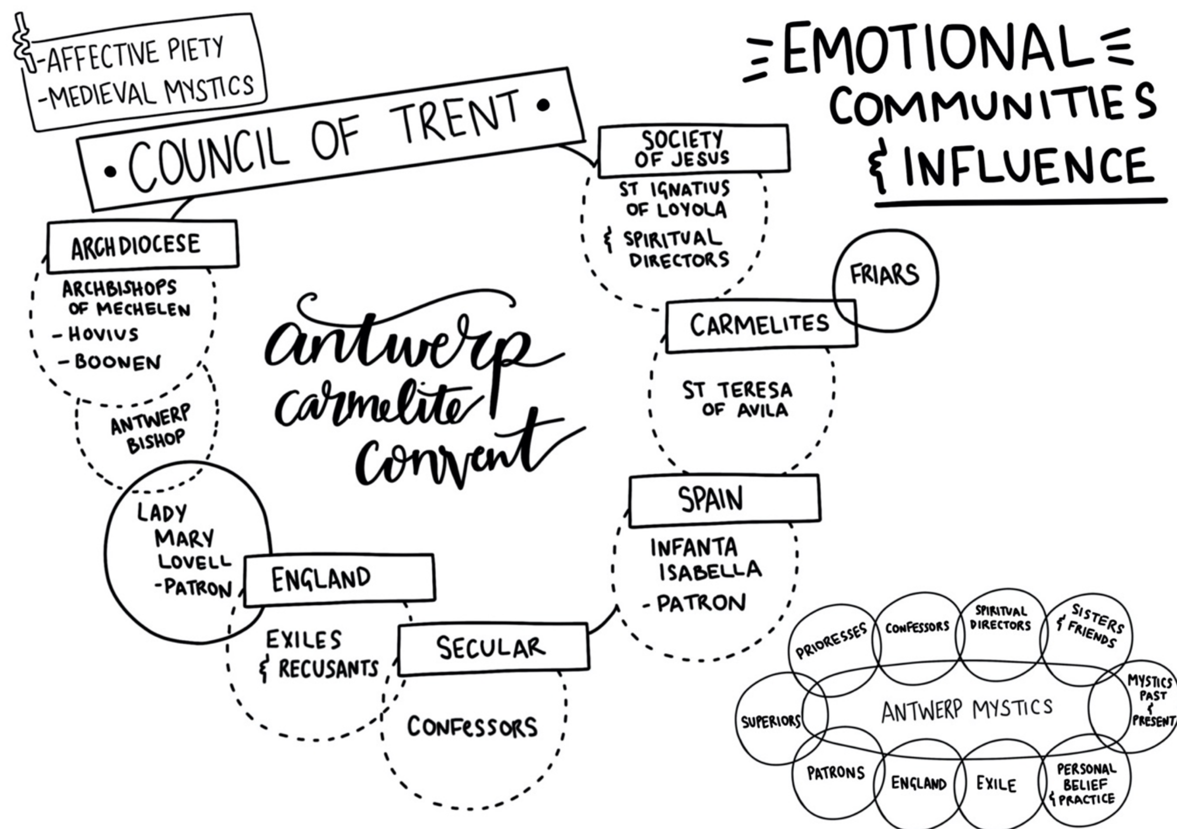

Figure 1: A diagram of the intersecting emotional communities found within and outside the Antwerp convent.

We can see how this functioned in the diagram which depicts the people who influenced the convent's core emotional community. It was designed by using Rosenwein's methods while reading the annals in order to identify and separate the disparate figures featured throughout the narrative. The largest circle on the left shows outside influences. They are placed under the banner of the Council of Trent whose decrees determined all Catholic practice in the seventeenth century. Above the Trent banner, the continued importance of medieval affective piety and mysticism in conventual practice is registered. One the left-hand side of the circle, I

have connected the archdiocese, the archbishops and the bishops, with the lay patron Lady Mary Lovell (1564-1628) and English exiles. These constitute what I consider "ecclesiastical/secular" groups, contrasted with those on the right who are largely "monastic" groups. The patron, Spanish Infanta, Isabella Clara Eugenia (1598-1621), is placed here as she aligned herself closely with the Carmelite order and ran her court as a "monastic" one. Importantly, the friars, though connected through the Carmelites, are outliers in that, as I will argue in this chapter, the dispute rendered them as incompatible with the convent's emotional community. The smaller circle on the right-hand side identifies the emotional influences within the convent. The Antwerp mystics were influenced, strengthened and legitimised by multiple individuals, revealing that the practice of mysticism was communal.

Using this diagram, I will form three "groups" that inevitably shaped the convent's emotional community through their own shared emotional norms. These were ultimately emotions the nuns considered acceptable in order to practice their spirituality. I will do this by considering the context of the dispute narrative. The first group that the dispute highlighted, after the friars, was that of the bishops. Their narrative was used expressly to contrast and compare the emotional style of the friars. It will be shown how the annals used these differing relationships to produce the bishops as a model for good oversight, teaching the nuns what to tolerate and what not to tolerate. The second group is more disparate and combines the individuals of the lower half of the large circle, the secular patrons Lovell and Isabella, and the English exiles. Both patrons of the convent were drawn into the dispute by the friars. The key theme for this group was the importance of building social and political security, and identity. The third and final group I will explore is the community of the convent itself. The emotional communities within the convent walls were as numerous as those outside. These communities include the mystical nuns, the choir and lay sisters, and internal interactions with superiors, confessors, spiritual directors, and visitors. This group will be discussed more broadly as it

pertained to the dispute, as well as considering the important precedent of the first prioress, Anne Worlsey's own mystical experience. Further chapters of this thesis will discuss in more depth how mysticism worked within the convent. But here I will discuss what emotions the nuns gave value to and expressed as an emotional style with each other.

In discussing how this dispute constructed an emotional community, especially regarding mystical experience, it is evident that the legacies of St Teresa of Avila and the Jesuits, including St Ignatius of Loyola, played key roles in the events. Their influence over the convent's spirituality and governance will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter. Although this chapter only explores three combined groups, the ecclesiastical, the secular and nuns, it should be understood that these were not the only ones that affected the Antwerp nuns. Despite their strict enclosure, the nuns were a part of many emotional communities either intersecting or distinct from one another, including the local population, convents of other orders across the continent, the Church in Rome, theologians of universities and secular priests. I have chosen three of these groups which best exemplify key emotional communities. These groups were central in the nuns' narrative of the dispute and they continued to be influential as later chapters will reveal. I argue that the annals show how the nuns forged a conventual emotional community with Anne Worsley at its centre that was focused on harmony and survival with these intersecting groups.

i. The Dispute with the Carmelite Friars

> I had divers [trouble] with the fryers of the Order because they would have me begin divers new cerimonyes and customes to which I did continually resist, which I could doe the better because I was in esteem with the Provinciall who was loath to grive me because he knew I had many troubles, so that with the Superiors I had no difficulty, but so many with the Confessors of the Order that we could not have held out without great partialityes [*sic*] and factions, and

> tho we were but few and little above 2 years that there were Ordinary Confessors, if the Religious had not been very confident with me we had been in confusion and discord one with the Other, it would be to long to set down the great confussion and strange manner they would have brought in, far from the custome and practice of our Blessed Mother.[19]

Between 1610 and 1619, Anne Manzanas was mentoring a young Anne Worsley, the future founding prioress of the Antwerp English Carmelites, when the issue of spiritual direction arose. The Carmelite friars' demands were simple: they wished to remove the nuns' capacity to choose their confessors and to change confessors when they believed the relationship no longer worked. The nuns had been following the reformed order's founder, St Teresa of Avila's guidance closely, including her preference for Jesuits as spiritual directors. The Carmelite friars believed it should be the men of their order who guided the nuns on their religious journey and not the Jesuits. Even as a young nun, Anne Worsley believed strongly that St Teresa's reform, which the friars of the order also lived under, was justified and should not be changed. When Anne Manzanas asked the convent if they should make these changes, Anne Worsley, in an emotional display pleaded with her not to give in, later writing of the affair, "I durst not plainly deny our Mother, but prayed her with tears that she would not require such a thing of me."[20] Although Anne Manzanas had been a companion of St Teresa, she understood the hierarchy of the Church and the obedience she had vowed to the superiors of the order, which included the friars and the provincial who governed their area. In the light of Anne Worsley's tearful resistance, Anne Mazanas decided to defy the friars and uphold the Teresian constitutions. What follows in Anne Worsley's life writing is her own struggle for many years to resist the friars. When she became the foundress and prioress of the English

[19] "Short Colections," 13.

[20] "Short Colections," 7.

Carmelite convent in Antwerp, the issue re-emerged to become a pivotal event in the story of the cloister's foundation and history.

Anne Worsley wrote of these earlier days in her life as a troubling and emotional time. Her obituary in the Antwerp annals is lengthy and contains repetitive narratives about the dispute that, in every way, marks the foundation of the convent. The emotional community of the Carmelite nuns at Antwerp was built around Anne Worsley's struggle for spiritual fulfillment against what she believed to be a corrupting force. The Carmelite friars were set on changing some of the constitutions laid down by St Teresa and only after a long struggle Anne Worsley, and the religious community, succeeded in preserving rights which they believed were central to their identity as Carmelite nuns.

During the dispute with the friars, multiple parties were drawn into the process that led to the Papal Bull of 1623. The nuns sought the advice of university theologians, prominent members of the English exiled gentry, and nuns in other convents. The annals describe the friars' own communication with their patrons, Lady Mary Lovell and the Spanish Infanta, as well as Anne Worsley's mother superior, Anne Mazanas. The only published source of the dispute is the Antwerp annals and papers.[21] The dispute occurred with the English Carmelite

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[21] Scholarship on seventeenth-century Carmelite friars is almost non-existent and sources for this time period are elusive, although there may be documents related to this dispute in the Vatican archives. Future research in this area would be fruitful in understanding the full picture of the dispute. Although a book exists on Carmelite friars in the seventeenth century, it only describes their English missions, Benedict Zimmerman, *Carmel in England: A History of the English Mission of the Discalced Carmelites, 1615 to 1849* (Burns & Oates, 1899); There is also a book by Frances Andrews that discusses the medieval Carmelite friars; *The Other Friars: Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006).

friars since they had been confessors for the English nuns.[22] The story remains one-sided as there is little to no scholarship on the English Carmelite men during the seventeenth century. The one or two studies on the friars during this period do not detail where or how they lived, nor do they touch upon this demand for constitutional change, focusing instead on their missionary work to England.[23] For this thesis, at least, the Carmelite friars remain without a voice in this argument. In Chapter Three of this thesis, I explain that multiple nuns in the convent had Jesuit spiritual direction before entering religious life and had been directed to the Carmelite order through fathers from the Society of Jesus.[24] Being able to choose their confessors was essential to the English nuns as they sought to emulate St Teresa, in addition to these spiritual relationships with Jesuit priests and Ignatian spirituality forged in their lives before they entered the cloister.

The struggle between the friars and nuns continued into the Antwerp convent's very foundation. According to Anne Worsley's testimony in the annals, the English patron Lady Mary Lovell originally wanted to establish the Discalced Carmelite convent under the government of the Bishop of Antwerp, although her reasons are not made explicit. The male members of the Discalced Carmelites openly opposed the bishop's governance and Lovell finally accepted Carmelite superiors so long as the sisters could continue to ask for the assistance of the Society of Jesus. The friars upheld this agreement at first, but the Provincial

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[22] Anne Worsley did know Dutch and French, but that cannot be assumed for the rest of the community. I also make this assumption due to the fact that the secular priests and Jesuit spiritual directors the nuns chose were English.

[23] Peter Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees on the Continent 1558-1795, Volume 1: The English Colleges and Convents in the Catholic Low Countries* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1914), 354-8; James P. Rushe, *Carmel in Ireland: A Narrative of the Irish Province of Teresian, or Discalced Carmelites, A.D. 1625-1896* (Sealy, Bryers and Walker, 1903).

[24] See more in chapter three, 133.

Tomás Díaz Sánchez of Avila (professed as Thomas of Jesus, a discalced Carmelite in 1587 and Provincial of Flanders until 1621), reputedly "out of pretence of greater convenience […] tell the Prioress she would Governe with more ease […] if it were left in his power to Grant them such Ghostly Fathers as he should think Good." [25] Anne Worsley proceeded by respectfully denying Tomás Díaz Sánchez suggestion and continued to choose the confessors of the convent.

Anne Worsley strengthened her case by seeking learned advice, which, if the nuns' account is to be believed, affirmed their right to retain the privileges obtained by St Teresa. The sisters successfully canvassed the opinion of a range of people, including other Carmelite superiors such as Dominic Ruzzola (Dominick of Jesus Maria, 1559-1630), definitor general, procurator general, and provost general of the Italian congregation."[26] Despite this, Tomás Díaz Sánchez repeated his demand that the convent should alter its constitutions, regarding the appointment of confessors. The nuns' narrative detailed the growing resentment and desperation of the friars. The men sought the assistance of numerous people, including the convent's patrons, to "persuade" Anne Worsley to accept the changes. They also advised recusant women not to join the Antwerp convent, hurting the community financially and socially. Anne Worsley dealt with these issues while also working with other religious authorities to close the matter. Tomás Díaz Sánchez' final ultimatum commanded Worsley to burn the Teresian constitutions, indicating the friars' growing desperation.[27] The dispute was officially closed when Anne Worsley was advised to present the case to Pope Gregory XV.

[25] "Short Colections," 46.

[26] "Short Colections," 48.

[27] "Short Colections," 48-9.

The pope sided with the nuns, removing the authority of the friars over the convent, instead placing it under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Antwerp.[28]

Privately, Anne Worsley repeatedly wrote of her long suffering and confusion during the dispute, but she felt compelled to maintain a public persona of resoluteness and strength in order to legitimise her position. She balanced this emotional turmoil in the convent by contrasting the emotional norms of the community's other religious and its secular patrons with the friars. As explained, Rosenwein has shown how textual sources were used to establish an emotional community, and Anne Worsley built her convent's accepted norms through her narrative of the dispute.[29] She first does this by presenting the friars' emotional style as damaging to the religious women's unity. The narrative gave priority to the importance of a unified group and identity – one built on the importance of emotional bonds. Anne Worsley noted that the confessor at the beginning of the dispute was Father Wadding (probably Peter Wadding S.J., d.1644), an Irish professor of theology.[30] Tomás Díaz Sánchez had no issue with Wadding's work at the convent, and problems did not arise until he departed, and Father Braye (Francis Braye S.J., d.1624) arrived.[31] Tomás Díaz Sánchez had not been told about this replacement, and proceeded to appoint an unidentified Carmelite friar as the convent's new ordinary confessor,

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[28] "Short Colections," 48.

[29] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 1-16.

[30] Alfred Webb, *Compendium of Irish Biography; Comprising Sketches of Distinguished Irishmen, and of Eminent Persons Connected with Ireland by Office or by their Writings* (Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, 1878), 542.

[31] Thomas M. McCoog, *English and Welsh Jesuits 1555-1650, Part 1: A-F* (London: Catholic Record Society, 1994), 125.

> who carryd himself in such a Manner as had not the union of the Religious women been very Strong, he would have made them oppose one against another, as for example he would tell the Superior how much he labourd to gain the Religious to her and tell the Religious how much he did to gain the love of the Superiour to them, In the mean while he would sett the Religious to mark the faults of one another and to tell him of them, but his indirect proceedings were discovered by the sincerity and freedome of the Religious with their Prioress.[32]

The nuns argued that the confessor intended to sow discord in the convent through manipulation, thus attempting to damage the community emotionally. Conversely, he claimed to be helping Anne Worsley and the rest of the house "gain the love" of the other party, thereby insinuating there was animosity or distrust among the nuns. He also encouraged them to dwell on each other's faults and to tell him about them. If indeed there was no animosity between them, the confessor's actions fostered the discontent he claimed to be fixing.[33] Anne Worsley asserted his games were discovered through the nuns' feelings of "sincerity and freedom" with her. This suggests that the community was emotionally stronger than the confessor's lies. Worsley and her sisters saw him as dangerous to the community and had him replaced by a secular priest, "though this Change were nothing pleasing to the Fryers."[34] The prioress made her argument stronger by giving explicit evidence regarding the emotionally manipulative methods the friars used against them.

[32] "Short Colections," 47.

[33] It should be noted that although the nuns appeared to remain unified during the dispute, the annals were presenting the convent's preferred account for posterity that there was no internal disunity. As Claire Walker as shown, other disputes over spiritual direction led to some division amongst the nuns. The Antwerp annals would not include these in order to protect its edifying narrative. Walker, *Gender and Politics*, 43-73.

[34] "Short Colections," 47.

Anne Worsley effectively used the annals' narrative to argue her, and therefore the convent's, spiritual and emotional authority over the friars. The nuns built upon this by including their own evidence which emphasised the righteousness of her position.

> Another time one of the Fathers who was her [Anne Worsley's] particular friend and whom she loved and esteemd extreemly, after having used many arguments and perswasions knelt down upon his knees and with tears begd she would yeald to them and tho this did effect her very much, yet she made as if she was not the least moved, and we may see by what she writs her self that she was often inclined to comply to content them and for the great affection she bore them and particular obligations to many of them yet she overcame her self so as never to shew it in her exteriour and she says her self that the Religious never lost their peace of mind, in all the time of this troublesome business only using their endeavours with a peacefull Confidence in God.[35]

This passage presented Anne Worsley as a pillar of strength before the sobbing friar on his knees. The narrator affirmed the love and affection Anne Worsley felt towards the friar but shows her as a level-headed, resolute leader. Despite the threat of emotional discord in the convent due to the dispute, Anne Worsley had "peacefull Confidence in God," the nuns' ultimate authority and source of strength. There are multiple layers in the description of this incident. The passage was recalled by an unknown nun, not Anne Worsley, so it is uncertain when this account was documented. Nevertheless, the compiler chose to include this in the narrative for a purpose. The incident allowed the nuns to show that their defiance of the friars was not an easy decision. Instead, it was a serious and heartfelt commitment to their faith.

[35] "Short Colections," 27.

The women stood together despite multiple attempts by the friars to undermine them. In the annals, this worked to reinforce convent unity, indicated by Anne Worsley's resilience and saintly leadership. The emotions of frustration in contrast to calmness repeated throughout the dispute strengthened the nuns' position. Although they highlighted their suffering in opposing their superiors, their determination to pursue the righteousness of their cause, enabled them to regulate their emotion. Meanwhile, the friars collapsed and dissolved under their impassioned offensive. This indicates two emotional styles between the nuns and the friars. As women, the nuns had to show moderation of emotion, otherwise, their decisions would have been considered undisciplined. Although post-Tridentine law stressed moderation of emotion for men too, the friars were not under such strict discernment of their actions. While women showed constraint, men were able to express themselves and their frustrations more freely. The inclusion of the weeping friar incident instructed future nuns about the importance of emotional regulation in their conduct. It also reminded them of the bond they held with the men of their order, despite the dispute.

Anne Worsley stressed the love and affection she bore her Carmelite brothers, but her narrative suggested that they scrupled at nothing in their campaign against her, even sending reports of her resistance to the woman she considered her close friend and guide, Anne Mazanas:

> Since that time having occassion to speake with the Reverend Mother Anne of St Bartholomew [Anne Mazanas] who seemd to have somewhat favourd the Fryers party, having written divers letters to perswade me to yeeld to their pretentions concerning the Allterations […] sometimes the Provinciall and others had ordained her to writ such and such things, other times she did doe it of her self moved by many reports they made of what I [Anne Worsley] did in this business where upon she was divers times afflicted and troubled in mind, the more because she had been my Superior and I still held her as a Mother, so being one day very much troubled for

> this in prayer she made complaints to Allmighty God, whereupon our Blessed Saviour appeard to her, and said these words, be not afflicted what she doth in this business is very well and pleasing to me, for it is necessary for the good of the Order.[36]

Anne Mazanas's mystical vision was an essential part of Anne Worsley's narrative as it suggested divine sanction for the nuns' position. The nuns used the shared emotional norms of the groups they converged with, in this instance other Carmelite nuns, to strengthen their position against the incompatible group, the friars. The vision itself was explicitly in favour of the convent, with Christ stating "it is necessary for the good of the Order" to fight the friars against the changes to the constitutions. Furthermore, it was not Anne Worsley but Anne Mazanas, a companion to their founder St Teresa, who received this vision. Anne Worsley drew a direct line of spiritual succession through her relationship with Anne Mazanas to the saint, and the Antwerp nuns' shared mystical experiences reinforced the authority they claimed as a community. Anne Mazanas shared a similar emotional style to Anne Worsley, and the narrative made sure to highlight this as acceptable Carmelite practice.

As prioress, Anne Worsley had to decide whether to give in to the friars' demands or stand against them. As a Carmelite nun, she had sworn obedience to her superiors, including the friars, as well as the order's reformer and founder, St Teresa of Avila. Anne Worsley's narrative of the dispute does more than act as proof of her authority and obedience to the saint and God. It also reinforced a narrative of the suffering she endured. The communities that existed inside and outside the convent were at odds with one another. Conversely, it also showed how these communities coalesced, with advice and solace given by fellow religious and non-religious alike. This was especially apparent at the resolution of the dispute:

[36] "Short Colections," 50.

> [Anne Worsley] performd in her life the true practices of our holy Mother St Teresa which she had all directly from her Holy Companions, she took care to leave it in such a forme before her death that none could stray from it by ignorance, And to this end with the leave and Orders of the ArchBishop of Mecklin [Boonen] and the Bishop of Antwerp [Nemius] she procured an Asembly at Alost in the year 1639 where she proceeded as cheif [*sic*] and gave the points which composes our Ceremoniall according as she had been instructed from the first severall of the Spanish Mothers and affirmd to be the meathod wherewith our Holy Mother Governd her Monasterys.[37]

Although we do not know who attended this assembly in Alost, it represented the coming together of a shared emotional community. This was a pivotal moment in the convent's history where the nuns' spirituality, secured by their challenge to the friars' authority, shaped the cloister's historical narrative. In turn, the narrative served to build upon and strengthen that emotional community. The shared emotional norms of the converging groups in the dispute were used to contrast and negate the emotional community of the friars. Their attempts to sew disunity and dissent served not to fracture this group, as they apparently had intended, but rather fortified its identity – an identity grounded in Teresian heritage which was recognised by the bishops who became part of it too.

ii. The Archbishop of Mechelen and the Bishop of Antwerp

The canons and decrees of the Council of Trent defined the early modern Catholic Church's orthodox belief and practice, but also established desirable emotional norms. In this section, I will argue that the upholders of the Tridentine reform, the archbishop and the bishops,

[37] "Short Colections," 30.

represented an acceptable emotional community, grounded in paternal affection, for the nuns. Claire Walker has written on the strict gender binary of the seventeenth-century Church. She states that "the monastic household ideally replicated the early modern gender order."[38] Although the abbess or prioress was the highest position that might be assumed by women holding authority within the convent, female superiors were "ultimately […] compelled to submit to a man."[39] This reflected the patriarchal early modern family unit too. Despite the mother holding power over children and servants in the household, she had to submit to the authority of the father. Using this familial metaphor not only upheld the power structure of the Church, but it also reflected contemporary views. Katie Barclay has asserted that early modern concepts of love were used "to temper male authority" in marriage.[40] Her research on Scottish marriage and patriarchy shows how men were charged in literature and philosophical concepts with protecting and nurturing their wives. By representing the husband as the preserver of the "weaker" women and children in his care, society attempted to lessen patriarchal tyranny within the family.[41] Like husbands in the patriarchal household, bishops held direct authority over women. Living outside the convent, however, complicated their role as husband. Their authority was thus extended through the male subordinates who resided within the convent, the confessors and spiritual directors. Together all of these men acted as protectors of their conventual households. The nuns were "brides of Christ," and their male superiors acted as husbands by proxy. In contrast to the dissident friars, the bishops and Jesuits represented an

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[38] Walker, *Gender and Politics*, 58.

[39] Walker, *Gender and Politics*, 58.

[40] Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 61.

[41] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power*, 42-63. See also: Rachel Weil, *Political Passions: Gender, the Family, and Political Argument in England, 1680-1714* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

alternative emotional community, grounded in moderation and flexibility. In the narrative of the annals, the nuns present these groups of men as starkly different. This section will consider how the familial dimension of the bishops' authority shaped the nuns' emotional community. To do this, I will examine how Tridentine law informed the Church's ideal emotional norms and explore how the bishops based their community upon the love, unity, care, loving respect, and perseverance.[42]

The Council of Trent was convened between 1545 and 1563 to address issues raised by Martin Luther and other Protestants and to reaffirm the Church's orthodoxy. The main focus of reform for nuns was the insistence upon strict monastic enclosure. Ostensibly to protect their spiritual purity and physical chastity, nuns had to conform to strict rules of movement, and their convents needed to be reinforced with grates and barriers. Despite these laws, nuns experienced the reform differently based on economic, political, and social circumstances.[43] In

[42] It should be noted, similarly to the friars, that the annals' anecdotes of the bishops were producing a model for good oversight. In comparison to the friars, the bishops were teaching the nuns what to tolerate and what not to tolerate. The difference in their relationships were being used to produce a certain form of emotional community through the annals.

[43] The success of Tridentine reform depended on different factors including the region, with Spain and Italy remaining majority Catholic taking reform easier than those in Germany where Protestantism was rapidly gaining power. Some convents accepted the changes and others fought the reforming priests. In Germany, convents had been offering prayers and other services to their communities and Tridentine law aimed to stop those practices through enclosure. Response to this reform was varied and scholars exploring what happened across Germany includes Simone Laqua-O'Donnell, *Women and the Counter-Reformation in Early Modern Münster* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Barbara Lawatsch Melton, "Loss and Gain in a Salzburg Convent: Tridentine Reform, Princely Absolutism, and the Nuns of Nonnberg (1620 to 1696)," in *Enduring Loss in Early Modern Germany*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 259-280; Alexander J. Fisher, "Themes of Exile and (Re-)Enclosure in Music for the Franciscan Convents of Counter-Reformation Munich During The Thirty Years' War," in *Enduring Loss in Early Modern Germany*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Leiden: Brill,

Italy, it is generally agreed that women were forced into cloisters as part of family strategies during a period of marriage dowry inflation. In other countries, enclosure was more negotiable, as in France, where churchmen like Vincent de Paul encouraged more liberal attitudes to strict incarceration for all religious women.[44] Helen Hills argues that Tridentine enclosure was "incarceration" and the nuns were "inmates."[45] The best-known symbol of enforced claustration is the sixteenth-century Venetian nun, Arcangela Tarabotti. Forced to become a nun by her parents, Tarabotti's treatise *Paternal Tyranny* (1604-52) fulminates against the practice.[46]

While Tarabotti's experience might reflect that of some nuns in Italian cloisters, other historians have argued her situation did not represent them as a whole. Claire Walker and Asuncion Lavrin give a more balanced argument that agrees that while there was a role played by parents in enclosing their daughters for financial and social concerns, spiritual diaries and

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2010), 281-306. For Spanish experiences of reform and enclosure see Elizabeth Lehfeldt, "Baby Jesus in a Box: Commerce and Enclosure in an Early Modern Convent," in *Mapping Gendered Routes and Spaces in the Early Modern World*, ed. Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (London: Routledge, 2015), 203-211.

[44] Baernstein, *A Convent Tale*, 2-4; Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity*; Carol Baxter uses the Ursuline and Visitadine communities as examples of French convents which initially accepted enclosure but used subversive methods to undertake charitable roles outside the cloister, "Women, Religious Conviction and the Subversive Use of Power," 111-121; On a similar study with Daughters of Charity, see Dinan, "Spheres of Female Religious Expression," 71-92.

[45] Hills, *Invisible City*, 8.

[46] Tarabotti, *Paternal Tyranny*; Craig Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly: Tales of Music, Magic, Art, and Arson in the Convents of Italy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010); Craig Harline, *The Burdens of Sister Margaret: Inside a Seventeenth-Century Convent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Anne Jacobson Schutte, *By Force and Fear: Taking and Breaking Monastic Vows in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Sperling, *Convents and the Body*.

letters exist that attest to the nuns' acceptance and joy in their vocation.[47] Despite research focusing on the enclosure of nuns, the Council of Trent outlawed specifically any force or manipulation of women into the religious life.[48] In addition, many religious women sidestepped some of the restrictions of enclosure and engaged in politics and formed active apostolates, like Mary Ward and those English convents that assisted exile networks.[49] Tridentine laws and how they were enacted were not monolithic nor immovable. What this means for the emotional community based on Tridentine ideals is that although there was one set of emotional norms, people within it often rejected, amended or acquired new emotional norms depending on distinct circumstances. For the Antwerp convent, the Archbishop of Mechelen and the Bishops of Antwerp operated as the male ecclesiastical emotional community that influenced the convent. I will investigate how the nuns used the bishops' emotional style to contrast that of the Carmelite friars.

In terms of emotion and practice, the Tridentine canons never explicitly suggested the abolition of feeling, nor do they even mention how mysticism should be handled. Scholarship on early modern Catholicism generally accepts that emotion, close relationships, and displays of mysticism were seen as suspicious, needing discernment, and that they should be controlled

[47] Walker, *Gender and Politics*, 30-7; Lavrin, "The Role of the Nunneries," 376.; This argument is also touched upon by Hills, *Invisible City*, 79; Caroline Bowden, "Missing Members: Selection and Governance in the English Convents in Exile," in *The English Convents in Exile, 1600-1800: Communities, Culture and Identity*, ed. Caroline Bowden and James E. Kelly (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 53-70; As well as other articles in this collection written by Jenna Lay, Andrew Cichy and Carmen Mangion.

[48] H.J. Schroeder, trans., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (St Louis: B. Herder, 1941), 228-9. (Hereafter *Council of Trent*).

[49] Laurence Lux-Sterritt, *Redefining Female Religious Life: French Ursulines and English Ladies in Seventeenth-Century Catholicism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Walker, "Crumbs of News," 635-655.

through daily religious practice.[50] Perfection, the main aim for professed religious was a form of "self-annihilation," a paradox of "life in death." However, self-annihilation through the destruction of emotion and relationships was not a homogenous experience. As Lux-Sterritt has noted, negotiation was always taking place within this paradox of embodied passions and spiritual feelings.[51] Tridentine canons suggested that expression of emotion should be controlled. The decree concerning the life and conduct of the clerics advised that "others fix their eyes upon them [clerics] as upon a mirror and derive from them what they are to imitate. Wherefore, clerics […] ought by all means so to regulate their life and conduct that in dress, behaviour, gait and speech, and all other things nothing may appear but what is *dignified, moderated, and permeated with piety*."[52] Moderation was central, bishops were told to "regulate their whole conduct that others may derive there from examples of *moderation*, modesty, continency, and of that holy humility which recommends us so to God."[53] Although moderation was a core theme throughout the decrees, the importance of the internal and external evidence of a devout heart was also emphasised. Regarding the Mass, the decrees stated that "all effort and attention must be directed to the end that it be performed with the

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[50] St Teresa of Avila was investigated by the Inquisition for her writing on meditation and mysticism, see Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity*; Multiple chapters, including Colin Thompson, Clare Copeland, Jan Machielsen and Victoria Van Hyning, discuss the "dangerous visions" and the discernment of "heretical saints" in *Angels of Light? Sanctity and Discernment of Spirits in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Clare Copeland and Jan Machielsen (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Aspiring Saints: Pretense of Holiness, Inqiuisition, and Gender in the Republic of Venice, 1618-1750* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Moshe Sluhovsky, *Believe Not Every Spirit: Possession, Mysticism and Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).

[51] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 187.

[52] *Council of Trent*, 152. Emphasis mine.

[53] *Council of Trent*, 232-3. Emphasis mine.

greatest possible interior cleanness and purity of heart and exterior evidence of devotion and piety."[54] Additionally, a decree for clerics described how they must signify their response to the Mass as "first shown by their outward disposition and appearance that they are there not in body only but also in mind and devout affection of heart."[55] The language of the canons obscured a directive repeated throughout the reform documents, highlighting an authentic and emotional interior experience. Although this emotional experience had to be expressed in moderation and humility.

Those responsible for enacting the reforms of the Council of Trent in the Carmelite Antwerp convent were the Archbishop of Mechelen and the Bishop of Antwerp. In the seventeenth-century, Antwerp was still implementing the Council of Trent's decrees after the Catholic victory over the Dutch Protestant rebellion. The first archbishop was Matthias Hovius (1542-1620). After accepting the position in Mechelen, he focused on reforming the remnants of the Church in Antwerp, in full agreement with the Council of Trent. He saw himself as a father to his flock, both religious and laity. Hovius' use of "father" in his role as archbishop reflected the patriarchal familial model. He exemplified the Tridentine calls for bishops to "reprove, entreat, rebuke [sinners] in all kindness and patience."[56] Hovius wrote copiously about his daily life in diaries.[57] His narrative focused on his struggles with reform and the compromises he found through this kindness and patience.

Hovius' emotional style was shaped by the religious wars and uncertainty of the sixteenth century. During the 1580s, the Protestant rebels had taken multiple cities in Flanders

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[54] *Council of Trent*, 150.

[55] *Council of Trent*, 151.

[56] *Council of Trent*, 81.

[57] Craig Harline and Eddy Put, *A Bishop's Tale: Mathias Hovius Among His Flock in Seventeenth-Century Flanders* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

and the Netherlands. The majority of the Catholic clergy fled and lived in exile, although they never gave up hope of returning to their Flemish parishes. In 1584, William of Orange was assassinated and in 1585 this allowed Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma (1545-1592), Philip II of Spain's general, to reclaim much of the Low Countries for Spain. The northern half formed the Protestant Dutch Republic while the south became the Catholic Spanish Netherlands. Hovius saw these events first-hand, fleeing Mechelen on 9 April 1580 during a Calvinist takeover. This shaped his approach to episcopal office. He was dedicated to the Council of Trent's reforms, to rebuilding the diocese and to ensuring the houses of religious women were protected in an area still populated with Calvinist sympathisers. Many of the convents had been ransacked and destroyed in the sixteenth century, and when the sisters returned, they lived with partial walls or none at all; Hovius wanted every nun behind walls both for their physical safety and their sanctity.

As a result of the political chaos many cloisters had achieved a degree of independence and closer ties with their family and local urban communities. Hovius deemed this inappropriate in the light of Trent, and he embarked on a programme of reform for women's religious houses, which had enclosure as its central tenet. For example, in the Benedictine Abbey of Grand Bigard, the community was made up of well-connected noblewomen who invited their families to stay, the sisters went out of the cloister for trips lasting several months at a time, and the convent had no walls. Hovius' approach to implementing Tridentine law in this abbey was to apply compromise and patience. He repeatedly negotiated and re-negotiated the importance of enclosure with the religious women. After many years, they came to an agreement. The convent walls would be built, but in return the nuns would be able to travel outside the convent for up to fourteen days. Hovius was content with this decision.[58] His

[58] Harline and Put, *A Bishop's Tale*, 219.

flexibility during a potential dispute with nuns contrasts markedly with the inflexibility and unwillingness to negotiate of the Carmelite friars. The friars were said to have used deceit and confronting emotional displays to manipulate the Carmelite nuns during their constitutional dispute, whereas Hovius worked with the Benedictine nuns to come to an agreeable outcome. He saw his authority as protective rather than absolute, and his emotional style reflected this.[59]

There is little scholarship on the bishops of Antwerp during the seventeenth century. However, evidence of their influence on the convent can be found in the Antwerp annals. The first Bishop of Antwerp to govern the convent was Johannes Malderus (1563-1633). He studied Philosophy at Douai University, and eventually, he was appointed Regius Professor of Scholastic Theology in Leuven. He was consecrated as Bishop of Antwerp by Hovius on 7 August 1611. Malderus' main concerns were social discipline and confessionalisation.[60] The Antwerp annals mention he was pleased "to say often to persons of great Condition that he here received all content and satisfaction without ever having any occassion of trouble by this

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[59] On Hovius' successor, Jacobus Boonen (1573-1655) see, Walker, *Gender and Politics*, 70-1, 72, 140, 142. Walker discusses the collapse of authority within the Brussels Benedictines abbey, with the nuns on both sides of the dispute calling on Boonen to mediate the situation. In contrast to the bishops of Antwerp I will discuss below, Boonen failed to ease tensions and restore unity in the convent, unable to assert his authority in an acceptable way to nuns.

[60] Ch. Piot, "Malderus (Jean)", *Biographie Nationale de Belgique, vol. 13* (Brussels, 1895), 223-226. http://www.academieroyale.be/academie/documents/FichierPDFBiographieNationaleTome2055.pdf; *Anti-synodica, sive Animadversiones in Decreta Conventus Dordraceni, quam vacant Synodum Nationalem, de quinque doctrinae capitibus, inter Remonstrantes et Contraremonstrantes controversis* (1620); *De virtutibus theologicis, et justicia et religione: Commentario ad Secundam Secundae D. Thomae* (1616); *Tractatus de restrictionum mentalium abusu* (1625); *In Canticum Canticorum Salomonis commentarius* (1628).

Community."[61] Gaspard Nemius (1587-1667) was Malderus's successor on his death in 1633. We glean some sense of his regard for the nuns in the obituary of Anne Worsley.

> [After Anne Worsley's death] Our Illustrious Lord Bishop of Antwerp Jasper [Gaspard] Neimus to shew his singular affection and devotion to her came and sung the Solemn Mass and preached her funerall Sermon, after which he Interrd her with his own hands, a favour he had never done to any, before or after, both he and his predecessor, often came to visit her and upon all occations expressd the highest esteem of her and her Government.[62]

Like Hovius and Malderus, Nemius was also Dutch and had studied theology at Douai. He became bishop of Antwerp in 1634 and remained in the position until he was appointed Archbishop of Cambrai in 1648, thus governing the Antwerp Carmelites for fourteen years, during ten of which Anne Worsley was prioress. The passage indicated that Nemius held Anne Worsley in high esteem, granting "a favour he had never done to any, before or after." Like Hovius, Nemius saw himself as a father to his monastic daughters. The annals mentioned that Nemius "shewd Sufficiently his esteem and affection to this Community, (whom he calld the Children of his heart)."[63] Anne Worsley's personal internment points to Nemius' admiration of the convent and its first prioress. In the annals this served to emphasise the importance of familial governance within the nuns' emotional community.

Marius Ambrosius Capello (1597-1676) was the third bishop of Antwerp mentioned in the annals. He succeeded Nemius in July 1654. Capello was a Dominican and, like his

[61] "Short Colections," 63.

[62] "Short Colections," 33.

[63] "Short Colections," 63.

predecessor, had studied theology at Douai and Leuven.[64] The annals go into more depth about his relationship with the community, initially reporting that "[Capello being] informed he had under his care an English Monastery, Answered he would Govern those Religious with an iron rod intimating the Notion he had that the English was a strange ungovernable sort of people."[65] He therefore visited the convent several times a week for six consecutive weeks to assess what was necessary to govern the English nuns. His acquaintance with the sisters as a result of these regular interactions fostered an affection for the foreigners. The annals report that "no Father could be more tenderly kind, then he was to the Community, not [*sic*] Children more affectionated then they were to him […] once walking with some of the Religious in the Garden and seeing one of the Walls very low, he said very pleasantly, I see, Dear Children Love only incloses you for had I had such walls in Italy, I should not have kept one Nun in the Monastery."[66] Capello's reversal from wanting to govern "with an iron rod" to tender kindness demonstrates Barclay's argument about the use of love to temper male authority. After establishing a relationship with the nuns, Capello was said to adopt a governance grounded in affection and mutual respect that was the norm shared by his predecessors. The bishops therefore formed an emotional community fostered through their acquaintance with the nuns. Their shared norms of loving respect, unity and perseverance tempered the Tridentine decrees and monastic rules they sought to instil.

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[64] Lucien Ceyssens, "Capello (Marius - Ambroise)", *Biographie Nationale de Belgique*, vol. 37, (Brussels, 1971), 123-129. https://web.archive.org/web/20161220042059/http://www.academieroyale.be/academie/documents/FichierPDFBiographieNationaleTome2095.pdf.

[65] "Short Colections," 63.

[66] "Short Colections," 64.

In contrast with the friars, the annals represent the bishops as grateful for the English nuns' strict adherence to the reformed order. The Antwerp annals never explain why the bishops' governance was more harmonious than that of the friars, but I argue that it was caused by differing emotional styles. The bishops were more open to developing friendships and compromise, while the friars simply demonstrated an unwillingness to bargain because their authority was challenged, or they at least felt it was, by the Jesuit confessors. Despite the narrative's insistence on their inflexibility, the nuns and Anne Worsley still stressed their love and respect for the friars throughout the dispute. When external political factors, a constitutional disagreement, in this case, dominated a community, it resulted in fractured relationships and emotional bonds. The nuns' disobedience to the friars challenged their authority, which caused them to harden their emotional response and led them to heavy-handed governance. It is likely that other external factors influenced the friars, including issues on the English mission with Jesuits and their position as exiles themselves. This underpinned the difference in the emotional styles of the two ecclesiastical communities.

When the bishops took governance over the English Carmelites, they embodied the religious and early modern episcopal role of father. The annals emphasised that the bishops protected and nurtured the nuns under their care, and in return, the women assumed the expected reciprocal role of obedient children. The bishops' relationship with the nuns was a key part of the convent's emotional community. The archbishop or bishop would negotiate and compromise if there were issues with upholding Church orthodoxy or a religious order's constitution. This contrasted with the friars' fractious approach, which used manipulation and lies to bend the nuns to their will. This difference was perhaps one of external political factors that meant the friars took a defensive stance rather than attempting to compromise. The bishops brought an affectionate, moderate male authority to the nuns' emotional community allowing the nuns to assume better their roles as "brides of Christ" and focus on their spiritual vocation.

iii. The English Exile Community, Patrons and the Spanish Infanta

In the dispute, the friars also sought to fracture the security of the convent's secular patrons. Although the nuns' supporters did not form a single emotional community, as foreigners and exiles they relied on shared emotional norms which shaped an external community by being centred upon the convent. These shared norms were based on love, unity, tenderness, and care. The nuns resided in Antwerp, a part of the Spanish Netherlands, but remained dedicated to their English Catholic identity. Alexandra Walsham has pointed out how the English experience of Catholicism was distinct, adaptive, subversive, and emotional.[67] Scholarship on exile is extensive and a significant focus for early modern English Catholic research.[68] On the

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[67] Alexandra Walsham, "Translating Trent? English Catholicism and the Counter Reformation," *Historical Research* 78 (2005): 288-310.

[68] For research on exile outside the early modern Catholic experience see Thomas A. Tweed, *Our Lady of Exile: Diasporic Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); David Van Der Linden, *Experiencing Exile: Huguenot Refugees in the Dutch Republic, 1680-1700* (London: Routledge, 2015); Timothy G. Fehler, Greta Grace Kroeker, Charles H. Parker and Jonathan Ray, ed., *Religious Diaspora in Early Modern Europe: Strategies of Exile* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014); Ole Peter Grell, *Brethren in Christ: A Calvinist Network in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986). For Catholic exile see Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees*; John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975); Christopher Highley, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Benjamin Kaplan, Bob Moore, Henk van Nierop and Judith Pollmann ed., *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands c. 1570-1720* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Geert H. Janssen, "The Exile Experience," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation*, ed. Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen and Mary Laven (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 73-90; Tarantino and Zika, ed., *Feeling Exclusion.*

continent, despite being able to practice their religion more freely, English exiles' lives were not without risk or uncertainty. As Geert H. Janssen asserts, "[English] immigrants lacked citizenship […] For privileged Catholic elites the experience of social exclusion was deeply traumatic."[69] From the late sixteenth century, Catholic exiles built networks and institutions, like the English convents, to create a community to support them in their social, political, and economic exclusion. The nuns in turn depended upon the lay exiles, but they were also dependant on the Infanta. This network of advocates was necessary for survival and created close bonds between members. Through the founding and patronage of English convents, Catholic exiles reinforced both their connections to local society and their English identity.[70] However, the exile diaspora did not respond to the trauma of displacement in the same ways nor have the same emotional style. It will be shown how Lady Mary Lovell (1564–1628), the founding patron, was framed in the annals as having a similarly discordant style to the friars. She was a source of frustration for Anne Worsley and thus operated outside the emotional norms of the convent. However, the annals also mention patrons who exemplified the

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[69] Geert H. Janssen, *The Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 66.

[70] For more on fashioning identity and national identity see: Walker, *Gender and Politics;* "Experience of Exile"; Caroline Bowden, "The English Convents in Exile and Questions of National Identity, c. 1600-1688," in *British and Irish Emigrants and Exiles in Europe, 1603-1688*, ed. David Worthington (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 297-322; Kate Lowe, "Elections of Abbesses and Notions of Identity in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Italy, with Special Reference to Venice," *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2001): 389-429; Jenna Lay, "Devotional Culture and Intellectual Community in the English Convents in Exile," *Literature Compass* 14, no. 4 (2017): e12390. doi: 10.1111/lic3.12390; Mary-Louise Coolahan, "Archipelagic Identities in Europe: Irish Nuns in English Convents," in *The English Convents in Exile, 1600-1800: Communities, Culture and Identity*, ed. Caroline Bowden and James E. Kelly (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 211-228.

emotional style that contributed to the nuns' emotional community centred on love and maintaining unity.

Bridging the emotional communities of the convent's lay patrons was the shared experience of exile. Scholarship on trauma and exile crosses multiple fields and intertwines with the experiences of politics, war, and religion.[71] This trauma was caused by experiences of displacement, exclusion, insecurity, loss of identity, and grief.[72] As Walker notes, "the nuns wrote about the trials, tribulations, and grief of displacement, yet they also interpreted their exile positively, embracing its challenges […] They sought to alleviate the anguish of separation by engaging in efforts to secure its end and, thereby return to England."[73] Displacement potentially challenged identity and might easily fracture emotional communities across the channel. Despite this, the nuns held on to their English identity, repairing these communities and building new ones through this trauma. Convents may have, as Spohnholz suggests, "found solace and meaning in their hardships by seeing their experiences through the lens of biblical precedents and evocative models of Christian martyrdom, suffering and redemption."[74] The trauma of displacement was therefore mediated through the exiles spiritual practice and built into the identity that the convent cultivated. The patrons bolstered this identity through a political connection to the wider exile community, including the Spanish Infanta who assisted them, through an emotional community based on security.

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[71] Jacqueline Vansant, *Reclaiming Heimat: Trauma and Mourning in Memoirs by Jewish Re-émigrés* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001); Anna Haebich and Baden Offord, ed., *Landscapes of Exile: Once Perilous, Now Safe* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008).

[72] Walker, "The Experience of Exile"; "The Embodiment of Exile".

[73] Walker, "The Experience of Exile," 162.

[74] Jesse Spohnholz, "Calvinist and Religious Exile During the Revolt of the Netherlands (1558-1609)," *Immigrants and Minorities* 32 (2014): 236.

Lovell, as the founding patron of the Antwerp convent was staunchly English, demonstrated in her patronage of the exiled religious communities, but she did not always agree with the convent's emotional style. Born Jane Roper, she was the daughter of Sir John Roper Eltham, from an eminent Catholic family and by the sixteenth century, part of a small group of recusants living in Kent.[75] Peter Guilday describes Mary Lovell as "one of the most interesting characters among the exiles."[76] Lovell's stubborn determination to order things to her liking continued even after the dispute, with Anne Worsley lamenting:

> The Lady Lovell who had founded the Monastery, pretended to dispose of things according to her liking, because we could not observe such things as She desired being not fitting for our Order she was displeased and spoke hardly of us to Seculars which was a great grief to us, knowing it would be a hinderance [*sic*] to new beginners, some times we were driven to such termes with her, that I desired her either to leave deelling with her proceedings, or to take her Mony and lett us return to our Convents.[77]

Despite the hardship English recusants and exiles faced, which both Anne Worsley and Lovell endured for their faith, this passage shows how their shared experience did not necessarily mean shared emotional norms. Clearly, Anne Worsley had issues with Lovell, which were only compounded by the friars who wrote damaging letters to the convent's founder throughout the dispute. Although exiles often formed close communal bonds to survive the emotional trauma of displacement, individual people did not conform to the norms of every emotional

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[75] Arnold Hunt, "The Lady is a Catholic: Lady Lovell's Reply to Sir Edward Hoby," *Recusant History* 31, no. 3 (2013): 413.

[76] Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees*, 360.

[77] "Short Colections," 13.

community, which was certainly the case with Lovell and the nuns. The convent's narrative of Lovell's interactions with the nuns was similar to the friars. She sat outside the convent community and did not share its emotional bonds, nor its importance on maintaining security and unity. Lovell provided economic security for the nuns, but in the annals, she was cast in opposition to the convent's emotional community. As with the friars, Lovell's antipathy and conflict with the convent she had founded had positive consequences, further shaping the the religious community's shared emotional norms. The cloister's identity grounded in exile was bolstered by the suffering the nuns endured from both the friars and their lay founder.

In comparison to Lovell's emotional detachment, another patron of the convent exemplified the importance of familial bonds. Infanta Isabella was the Archduchess of the Spanish Netherlands. Although she was not a part of the English exile community, as a patron of the English convent, she helped to bolster the nuns position and rights on the continent. Isabella was a devout woman and just as strong-willed as Lady Mary Lovell. She had a personal interest in the Carmelite order and patronised multiple convents in the Low Countries, mostly Spanish houses. There is little documented interaction between the Infanta and the English Carmelites, but her relationship with other Carmelite houses hints at her emotional style. Isabella personally founded a Carmelite convent in Brussels, in 1607 with Ana *de* Lobera *y* Torres (Ana de Jesús, 1545-1621), another companion of St Teresa of Avila.[78] The convent became the Royal Convent, which stipulated that the nuns should pray for their sovereign in each mass service and even in their personal prayers.[79] Cordula van Wyhe finds evidence of Isabella's emotional and spiritual connections to the Brussels nuns that mirror the importance of the familial bonds that characterise the Antwerp convent's emotional communities. Isabella

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[78] Cordula Van Wyhe, "Court and Convent: The Infanta Isabella and her Franciscan Confessor Andrés de Soto," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, no. 2 (2004): 429.

[79] Van Wyhe, "Court and Convent," 426.

prepared her ladies-in-waiting or *meninas*, women who joined her court usually from Spanish or Flemish nobility, for marriage or cloistered life. She acted as a moral instructor in their lives, and although she diligently monitored them and strictly corrected their behaviour, she also treated them with care and love.[80] Young novices received a little wax figure of Christ holding instruments of the Passion when they entered the convent. Van Wyhe notes how "On several occasions the Infanta had personally embroidered the precious robes of the little figure, which was customarily carried in front of the young court lady during the procession to the convent where she was personally given away at the altar by the Infanta."[81] Isabella's level of attention and care to the novices indicates more than royal patronage to the ladies of her court; it demonstrated an emotional and intimate connection of motherly love. Isabella left the nuns a lasting, corporeal memory of her affection by giving personalised gifts and leading novices to the altar.

Isabella's patronage of novices was an intimate display of friendship but also a chance to perform the role of spiritual mother, which, as Van Wyhe argues, was "based on demonstrations of self-negation and familial intimacy, rather than of distant authority."[82] Isabella adopted her father, Philip II's concept of the "holy court." Philip II's Escorial was a monastery-palace housing the royal court with a cloister and basilica.[83] The compound demonstrated the royal family's fervent religiosity with Philip II as the spiritual father. In the Spanish Netherlands, Isabella discarded the usual etiquette requiring deference to her political

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[80] Van Wyhe, "Court and Convent," 425.

[81] Van Wyhe, "Court and Convent," 429.

[82] Van Wyhe, "Court and Convent," 427.

[83] Van Wyhe, "Court and Convent," 417; George Kubler, *Building the Escorial* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); Henry Kamen, *The Escorial: Art and Power in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

authority as Infanta, archduchess, and patron, instead adopting a familial relationship similar to that of a prioress. She did not allow the nuns to kiss her feet as they would a monarch, instead choosing the intimate and tender actions of a mother, caressing their faces and holding their hands.[84] Isabella was deeply religious and her nuns were an extension of that piety. The Infanta's emotional style differed significantly to that of Lovell, who was mostly emotionally distant as a patron. While Lovell provided economic security, Isabella provided spiritual and emotional security, in addition to political protection. Under her patronage, the Antwerp nuns strengthened their connection to the Carmelite order and they were nurtured by the emotional community of the Spanish court. Furthermore, the Infanta supplemented Anne Worsley's connection to St Teresa through her own emotional bonds with the saint's companions. Although Mary Lovell and the Infanta founded convents to display their religious, political, and social power, in addition to serving their own spiritual needs, their practice of patronage contrasted significantly between Lovell's detachment and Isabella's intimacy. Although these women were a part of the convent's emotional community, they provided varying emotional styles.

The Antwerp annals mentioned other English exiles who passed through the convent or had acquaintances with the religious women. These anecdotes further show how the nuns valued emotional connections and a sense of familiarity that reinforced social unity. The visit by the exiled King Charles II of England (1630-1685) and his brothers James, Duke of York (1633-1701) and Henry, Duke of Gloucester (1640-1660) in 1648 was only mentioned in passing. Catherine Clifton (Thecla of Saint Paul, 1624-1671), was described as having such a "most Angelicall Innocence" that when Charles visited, his brother James "came to the King and told him if he had a mind to see a pretty women he must goe to the Infirmary, which he

[84] Van Wyhe, "Court and Convent," 427.

did where dear Sister Tecla [Catherine Clifton] was."[85] The royal guests were not mentioned again in the annals and only served as an anecdote to support the obituary of Catherine Clifton. Although fleeting, the royal visit shows how the nuns were connected to the broader English exile community, sharing the experience of exile with the Stuarts. Walker has shown how English Benedictine nuns worked for the Restoration cause aiming for Catholic toleration on the king's return to England.[86] The nuns were part of a network of emotional communities that provided relief and agency to Catholic exiles. In turn, the exiles formed an emotional community which patronised the convent, strengthening and deepening the nuns' own emotional community. This exile group included the patronage of Catholic women, Lady Alethea Howard, Countess of Arundel (1585-1654) and her daughter-in-law Viscountess Mary Stafford (1616-1692).[87] Furthermore, the patronage of individual nuns by other Protestants, including Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1623-1673), showed how the exile community was not determined by religious confession.[88] The convent was intimately connected to the wider exilic community, Catholic and Protestant, living in the Low Countries. In the annals, these connections served the convent's edification and, in lived experience, provided a reciprocal support system emotionally, socially, and politically. In turn, the lay exiles strengthened their positions within intersecting emotional communities of the convent and the city of Antwerp by forming emotional bonds through trauma.

On the continent, the exile emotional community experienced displacement, this trauma fractured ties to existing emotional communities and shared identities, causing the need for new social, political, economic and emotional networks while re-fashioning identity in a

[85] "Short Colections," 188.

[86] Walker, *Gender and Politics*, 19, 102-3, 106, 113-14, 124-8.

[87] Motten and Daemon-de Gelder, "Margaret Cavendish," 6.

[88] "Short Colections," 235.

refugee context. The convent's founder and patron, Lady Mary Lovell, shared this experience, having been persecuted by the authorities in England until escaping into exile.[89] Her patronage of the convent was fraught, despite this shared experience. Like the friars, Lovell's position was to support the nuns' spiritual practices, but different goals and emotional styles complicated that role. Although she provided economic security, she was presented more as an adversary to the convent's emotional community that sought security. Charles II, Margaret Cavendish, and Alethea Howard showed that Lovell's interactions with the convent were not typical for English exiles. Margaret and Alethea formed intimate friendships with women before their profession in the Antwerp convent. Their attention to the convent showed emotional intimacy based on a shared identity and support of the emotional community. Not every individual in the emotional community conformed to it entirely; they experienced it differently depending on personality, social status, and gender. Isabella was not an exile, but as ruler devoted to Carmelite spirituality, she showed that the emotional bond and intimacy, found amongst the exiles, was vital for her too. The nuns' interactions with their patrons shows how they did not operate on their own – their community had to negotiate with differing individuals and intersecting emotional styles. In the context of exile, the nuns and patrons sought reciprocal associations with one another in order to form relief networks. Within the emotional community, these stories served to highlight the accepted emotional norms based on a familial connections, unity, love and peace, with those outside of the convent walls.

iv. Within the Convent

[89] In 1605, then widowed, Lovell was questioned by the authorities on suspicion she had been involved in the Gunpowder Plot. Although she maintained her innocence, Lovell continued to be harassed by the authorities. Eventually she fled to the continent. Hunt, "The Lady is Catholic," 414-415.

This section will demonstrate the different facets of the convent's emotional community. This chapter has shown how individuals from the ecclesiastical, secular and exile groups influenced the convent's emotional norms. Further, how the annals used the interactions of these individuals to edify the community was explored. Considering this context, I will examine individual nuns and how their emotional styles added to and served the conventual emotional community. Through their stories, the narrative will be shown to frame an emotional group based on the experiences and emotional style of Anne Worsley – the foundress and central pillar of the convent.

Catherine Windon (Catherine of the Blessed Sacrament, 1608-1666), left her home in Somerset at the age of thirteen to take the veil with the English Carmelites in Antwerp.[90] Religious profession for girls under sixteen years of age was explicitly prohibited by the Council of Trent, but Catherine Windon was certain of her vocation from a young age. When she was twelve, Catherine Windon experienced a mystical vision of God that secured her desire to give up her family, friends, and secular life for the convent. Her confessor or spiritual director had recommended the order and gave her St Teresa of Avila's *life* to read, which helped Catherine Windon in her decision. With the blessing of her mother and confessor, she started her journey from England to the continent, travelling with another gentlewoman who also wished to enter a convent, but obtaining passes to leave England proved difficult. The confessor offered her two choices, either she had to return home and try again later, or she could continue in disguise in the company of one man. Catherine Windon did not state who this man was but wrote, "I was much troubled at this, but yet resolved to put my self to any grief rather then to

[90] "Short Colections," 99. For a discussion on younger girls in Carmelite convents see Alison Weber, "'Little Angels': Young Girls in Discalced Carmelite Convents (1562-1582)," in *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe: An Interdisciplinary View*, ed. Cordula van Whye (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 211-226.

loose this occasion."[91] After crossing the channel and spending some months visiting other convents, all of which wanted her to stay, she made it to the English Carmelites in Antwerp.

After meeting with the convent's superiors, Catherine Windon was allowed to enter the novitiate although she could not officially profess until her sixteenth birthday in 1623. Until then, the community treated her as a child, not expecting her to follow the schedule of a novice. They noted how "[she] was of so sweet and amiable a temper that delighted all the Religious who used to call her the little Angel[,] at first she was only permitted to make half an hour of prayer, her Missterss would sometimes send her to the Kitchen at the second half hour to devert her by speaking to the Lay Sister who would ask her what her prayer had been, and she would answer with great devotion and Simplicity."[92] During her life as a nun, Catherine Windon became mistress of novices, and she was highly regarded by her former charges. "Mary of the Holy Ghost [Wigmore] was one of them used to speake of this her Dear Misstress with the highest esteem and affection possible."[93] Another nun's entry in the annals consistently commended her for her "courage" and "fervour." Catherine Windon exemplified the lengths that English exiles had to take to practice their faith. A thirteen-year-old girl resolute in her devotion travelled in disguise with a man across the sea, France, and the Low Countries to find her spiritual home.

Catherine Windon's story constructed a narrative of fervent English Catholic identity and the emotional bonds made through the trauma of displacement for religious vocation. This narrative was further developed in the obituary of Mary White (Mary of the Holy Ghost, professed 1623), which described an abundance of love, unity, and tenderness. Mary White was a noblewoman from Essex and the eighth nun to be professed in the convent in 1623 when

[91] "Short Colections," 100.

[92] "Short Colections," 101.

[93] "Short Colections," 101.

she was nineteen years old. Her life was marked by constant sickness. Despite this, she was portrayed as someone who enjoyed life, found pleasure in her vocation, and relished her community. The annals stated that:

> In time of her health and allso since her Sickness she hath been so mery and pleasant that she recreated all the Community, and this not now and then but continually, and every day found out some new conceit or other to give recreation, and yett in all her jests and merry discoureses she was never heard to say any groose thing, all her words were most pleasing and sweet.[94]

Passages like these reveal that despite the cloister's strict adherence to enclosure, interiority, and silence, the women also had "jests and merry discoureses." Mary White's sweetness and love of the community supported her performance of piety and the convent's spirituality. She maintained a cheerful disposition until the end, disliking expressions of grief or pain.

> She never was so much over seen as to give the least occassion to any of mortification or distast, but imployed all her forces, to comply and give content to all, this pleasant disposition she kept to the last, for when we came to visit her, her discourse was so pleasing, that she delighted all, she allways shewd a great love and affection to the Community and could not indure to see us troubled for her, and wept 2 or three days before she dyed because we could not forbear shewing to be griefd for her.[95]

Mary White's insistence on humour and affection, over suffering and grief, shows a fascinating rejection of the "accepted" emotional response to exile. Instead, she worked to build an emotional community within the convent based on love and merriment. This community of

[94] "Short Colections," 103.

[95] "Short Colections," 104.

love was further bolstered by the familial and emotional support of the bishops and patrons. Mortification was a reoccurring practice throughout the annals with mention of nuns fasting, kneeling on stones, flagellating themselves, and even eating foods they despised.[96] On the other hand, Mary White was noted for not doing this, instead choosing to serve her community. Other nuns' happiness was her "spiritual language." Mary White's sensitivity and affection ran so deep as to weep for her sisters instead of herself as she died. She demonstrated pious humility in her love for her vocation and her sisters, therefore contributing a particular emotional style to the community. In framing the annals around the dispute against the friars, Mary White and Catherine Windon's narratives served as an antithesis to their discord, showing how the emotional community which was grounded in the trauma of exile was nonetheless determined to pursue unity and peace.

There were no entirely negative stories or descriptions included in the annals. For the most part, the sisters were represented as exemplary members of the community, although many of them were critical of their own failings in their life-writing. While compiling the annals, Mary Birbeck consciously framed her community's history and successes. The convent's history served as communal edification, and this affected how relationships between the nuns were presented. The dispute with the Carmelite friars and a general uneasiness with Lovell served to uphold the unacceptable emotional styles.

In contrast, the *lives* of the nuns strengthened acceptable emotional styles. The importance of unity and familial love to the secular emotional community the annals built meant that potential fault lines within the internal community were lessened or discounted altogether. A book extolling the convent's history and piety was not going to include disagreements, particularly given it spent more than eighty pages building an image of the

[96] "Short Colections," 72, 123, 135, 145, 190, 196, 259, 298.

sisters unity in the face of the Carmelite friars. No one exemplified this unity more than Anne Worsley.

> When she [Anne Worsley] was so well as to come down to the Community they were all transported with joy and in a deep Silence that they might loose no word she said, she would at times give them most divine Instructions and be herself so inflamed with the love of God and devotion that it apeard in her Countinance seeming like one in an extasy[97]

Anne Worsley's piety was saint-like in this passage. Her presence "transported" the nuns. Transport was a keyword considering it was often used to describe mystical union.[98] To be transported was to join Christ in that other realm. Further, the emotion joy and a "deep silence" followed it, describing a hushed reverence Anne Worsley would drape over her children.[99] She united the community in their awe of her devotion and spiritual ecstasy. Anne Worsley was repeatedly shown as righteous in her defiance of the friars. Throughout the annals, choir and lay sisters, prioresses, and novices were equal in their spiritual potential.

> One of the Religious asking a more Ancient one what Contemplation was, she made her this answer doe you not observe that when our Dear Mother comes to us in the Recreation, how all the eyes of the Religious are fixd upon her so that they dare not stir

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[97] "Short Colections," 30.

[98] More so in general, especially in the medieval context.

[99] It has already been shown in this chapter the importance of assuming parental roles in early modern monastic communities. The prioress, being of the highest superiority in this convent was also seen as a mother. This is reflected in the title of "Reverend Mother" given to superior nuns in the community. Although women still answered to the authority of men.

> look or speak for fear to loose that satisfaction and those thinks themselves most happy that is nearest to her, this in regard of God is contemplation.[100]

Anne was the central pillar in the emotional community of the convent. Her position as founding prioress tied together the intersecting emotional communities as she came into contact with all of them. Considering the annals were framed around the dispute with the friars, Anne Worsley became the litmus test for defining what was acceptable and what was not. Her strength, love, faults, and spirituality were the basis of the convent's list of emotion words: heroic virtue, spirit, fervour, love, charity, union, tenderness, compassion, care, obedience, submission, loving respect, perseverance. These emotion words formed the convent's emotional style. However, as the other examples show, every nun had the potential to be Anne Worsley, to attain perfection and to inspire others. Despite the order's aim of perfected interiority and "death from the world," the nuns were still human and grappled with experiences of exile and isolation. They sought security, comfort, joy, and love with each other. They had all travelled dangerous journeys and found like-minded women to create a community that only served to strengthen that final goal of death and eternal salvation. Anne Worsley represented the ideal emotional style. She struggled with illness, doubt, and spiritual dryness but ultimately gave the community a sense of unity and love. Readers of the annals could find the culmination of their emotional communities in Anne Worsley's experiences.

v. Conclusion

[100] "Short Colections," 30.

Barbara Rosenwein's methodology of "emotional communities" is flexible and straightforward to use. It can be used to find emotional communities in a chosen group or society and go further to understand how multiple communities interacted and affected each other. Groups of people can be analysed but so can the individual, developing a richer understanding of how the nuns emotionally interacted with the world. This methodology allows for a new look at and understanding of the dispute with the Carmelite friars. By looking at how emotional communities negotiated amongst themselves, through the dispute, a more nuanced approach to the political and spiritual power dynamics is revealed. Emotions are not just essential to the community's actions and reactions throughout the dispute, but its narrative also uses them to confirm the prioress, Anne Worsley's decisions and practices as spiritually sound. A Carmelite father begged on his knees with tears in his eyes for Anne Worsley to bend to their wishes. She was resolute and calm, which was acceptable to her male superiors. Calmness showed that Anne Worsley's defiance was not a rash, emotional subversion of authority but a measured response to unacceptable changes to the convent's spiritual practice. At the same time, the narrative is quick to note how she suffered, knowing she was breaking her vows of obedience and submission, representing a critical inclusion to explain the type of power she sought against the friars in the eyes of a discerning male, superior reader.

The nuns ultimately won the dispute and were governed by the Bishop of Antwerp and the Archbishop of Mechelen. I have shown how Hovius, Malderus, Nemius, and Capello shared an emotional community and individual emotional styles centred on Tridentine values, namely strict enclosure and tempered paternal authority. The decrees supporting their reform did not necessarily prohibit emotion, but it was generally accepted that interiority was the goal for contemplatives, and therefore, relationships and interactions with others should be moderated. The bishops had each experienced years of Protestant chaos in their cities. They were shaped by their intersecting emotional communities in the Spanish Netherlands and

Rome. The accepted emotional style in these communities was to treat those they governed with patience and stressed the importance of negotiating and forming paternal bonds with their "children." The bishops were shown to be emotionally invested in the convent and the nuns who lived there. The bishops' emotional community was a model for good oversight, sharing an emotional ideal of protective familial bonds that could compromise for the good of the convent in direct contrast to the friars. This served to strengthen and unify the emotional community within the convent.

Outside the convent, the nuns were emotionally tied to lay patrons. Many of whom were English exiles who experienced a particular kind of trauma born out of displacement, insecurity, grief, and loss of identity. This exilic trauma isolated individuals who in turn formed emotional communities to cope with the loss of a secure homeland. The convent's founding patron, Lady Mary Lovell, an English exile, knew this trauma as a persecuted Catholic, but this shared identity did not always mean an individual would slot perfectly into the emotional community. Lovell was a discordant figure in the Antwerp annals who did not always agree with or support the community in the way a patron should. Meanwhile, the convent's other substantial patron was the Spanish Infanta Isabella, who was personally and emotionally dedicated to the Carmelite order. Her emotional style, that of protective mother who clothed and attended the profession of the novices in her court, was mirrored by the English exiles in Antwerp, Margaret Cavendish and Alethea Howard. Together the patrons shared in forming the emotional community of the convent, benefitting reciprocally, bolstering each party's security, sense of identity, and building emotional bonds in the foreign city.

Finally, there was the emotional community inside the convent. The annals outline the emotional values of the convent. Those values included heroic virtue, love, union, tenderness, compassion, obedience, loving respect, and perseverance. Throughout the annals these values were made clear in the stories of relationships and interactions that, contrary to the Council of

Trent, were imperative to the survival of the community and the practice of the sisters' spirituality. Their uniqueness was included in the annals as edifying teaching moments, celebrations of the nuns' qualities of humility, good humour, piety, and spirituality. When their prioress Anne Worsley came to recreation, the community was hushed into quiet awe, her interiority and piety so powerful she inspired generations. The little angel of the convent, Catherine Windon, left her homeland at the tender age of thirteen to follow God's call to the Carmelites in Antwerp.

The emotional communities of the seventeenth-century English Carmelite convent were diverse, with even more intersecting than those discussed here. This chapter adds to the rich scholarship of the political, social, and emotional connections made through enclosed convents. Despite the protracted dispute with the friars of their order and their founder Lady Mary Lovell, the nuns found strong allies, friendships, and familial relationships. Their bishop became their father, their patrons as intimate political allies, and with each other, they were sisters who compromised, respected, and learned from each other, and who wept to cause each other grief. Furthermore, the nuns' emotional community and how they framed their interactions with others asserted their right to self-govern, separating them from other groups. laying the groundwork for an accepted mystical emotional practice. Essential to their mysticism were the methods of St Teresa of Avila and St Ignatius of Loyola who provided a programme of emotional practices that established the convent's spiritual emotional community.

Chapter Two

"The Strong Pillar of Prayer": Seventeenth-Century Spiritual Methods[1]

The use of Teresian and Ignatian spiritual methods can be found throughout the annals of the seventeenth-century Antwerp Carmelite nuns. As discalced Carmelites founded through Anne Mazanas, a close companion of St Teresa of Avila, and the young prioress who studied under her, Anne Worsley, the convent was passionate about its relationship with their Holy Mother and her teachings. As discussed in the previous chapter, Anne Worsley had fought fiercely to uphold Teresian constitutions that allowed the nuns to choose Jesuits as their spiritual directors. This connection saw the nuns undertaking retreats, a programme of daily prayer and meditation undertaken as a group, from Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* and in combination with the spiritual methods of St Teresa. The purpose of this chapter is to show that the Carmelites at Antwerp offer a typology for early modern mysticism, which reveals a spirituality grounded in medieval affective piety, and further developed by Teresian and Ignatian influences. However, it was different to its medieval antecedents in its materiality and corporeality. The nuns brought their own English and exile experience to their spirituality, creating a unique form. Anne Levesson's (Anne of St Teresa, 1607-1667) description of how she chose to join the Carmelites highlights this connection between Carmelite and Jesuit orders:

> Upon the first occassion I imparted my resolution to a father of the Society who was my Confessour, he like well of it incouraged me to Constancy and presently gave me notice of our

[1] St Teresa of Avila, *The Flaming Hart, or, The Life of the glorious S. Teresa foundresse of the reformation, of the order of the all-immaculate Virgin-Mother, our B. Lady, of Mount Carmel*, trans. Sir Tobie Matthew (Antwerp, 1642), 85.

> Blessed Mothers order, and from that Instant I felt such a cordiall love in Generall to it that I could not endure to think of any other place but our Monastery.[2]

She was just one of several sisters who described their Jesuit spiritual directors as champions of their spirituality and supporters of Carmelite institutions.[3] In this case, before Anne Levesson had entered the convent at twenty years old, she was already under the spiritual guidance of a priest of the Society. The priest's recommendation of the Carmelite order indicates that he had connections with the Antwerp cloister.

Priests of the Society of Jesus were popular spiritual directors for recusant and exiled English Catholics, due to the work of the Jesuits on the English mission. Although many early modern women aspired to a missionary apostolate, Tridentine law on the strict enclosure of religious women meant that this was impossible. However, although they could not emulate the Jesuits in the missionary field, women could undergo the same spiritual training by undertaking Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*. J. Michelle Molina has argued that the orders of religious women, such as the Ursulines and Mary Ward's Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, utilised the *Spiritual Exercises* to satisfy their missionary aspirations. She argues that the *Exercises* were a part of a devotional labour for religious women, which they were compelled

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[2] "Short Colections," 112.

[3] Elizabeth Huddleston's (Ignatia of Jesus, 1608-1688) brother was a Jesuit and informed her of the Carmelite order, "Short Colections," 153. Her taking of the name Ignatia shows the bond she felt for the Society of Jesus and their founder, Ignatius of Loyola. It should also be noted that although the nuns refer to the Jesuits as "confessors", the priests are not legally allowed to act as a confessor due to the Society's laws. For the nuns and women in their lives, the Jesuits always acted as spiritual director or extraordinary spiritual director (one who visits for a specific annual retreat). Conversely, considering the religious and political atmosphere in England in the seventeenth century, it could be assumed the Jesuit missionaries had to bend these laws in order to serve the secretive recusant community and acted as confessors when needed.

to share, and thus, Molina believes she begins to see a "systematic pattern of Ignatian spirituality experienced as a call to action."[4] However, the English Carmelites did not exhibit a similar excess of spirituality. Missionary practices were in stark opposition to Teresa's embrace of strict enclosure. Although she had fears of the Protestant threat, Teresa channelled action to combat it into the concept of an "apostolate of prayer", harnessing the power of the daily prayer practices to spiritually overcome the heretical threat. Therefore, the Carmelites at Antwerp remained enclosed using Ignatian methods in the *Spiritual Exercises* to strengthen their practice of Teresian spirituality. Teresa's personal association with the Jesuit order meant that the discalced Carmelites also shared devotional practices aimed at building a personal and embodied relationship with Christ. I argue that these practices were grounded first and foremost in medieval affective piety.

During the high Middle Ages, an increasingly affective piety flourished. Pioneered by the Franciscan order in the twelfth century, affective piety encouraged practitioners to not only meditate on Christ's Passion but also reproduce mentally images of Jesus' suffering, going so far as to imagine their own participation in the events.[5] The intended outcome was to rouse compassion and empathy for Christ's suffering, leading the believer to contrition and a deeper

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[4] J. Michelle Molina, *To Overcome Oneself: The Jesuit Ethic and Spirit of Global Expansion, 1520-1767* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 59.

[5] Stephen J. Shoemaker, "Mary at the Cross, East and West: Maternal Compassion and Affective Piety in the Earliest Life of the Virgin and the High Middle Ages," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 62, no. 2 (2011): 570-606; Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus As Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Thomas H. Bestul, *Texts of Passion: Latin Devotional Literature and Medieval Society* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Mark Amsler, "Affective Literacy: Gestures of Reading in the Later Middle Ages," *Essays in Medieval Studies* 18 (2001): 83-110.

relationship with God. The Passion had been an element in lay piety since the ninth century, but it had never been an essential focus. It had been more popular to use the image to focus upon God as the Creator and Father and Christ Triumphant, Jesus as the divine son of God. There was a shift in the early thirteenth century away from the Father towards the humanity of Christ, stressing the agonies he suffered on the road to Calvary and during the crucifixion.[6] By focusing Christian devotion on Christ's human body, there was a re-evaluation of the role of emotion, experience, and affectivity. Since the body was the only worldly thing humans shared with Christ, it was through the body that he felt compassion with the Christian faithful.[7] Christ's compassion for humanity was realised through his death and resurrection, which ensured human salvation. By focusing on this ideology, Christians sought to experience the compassion that Christ felt for them through *imitatio,* imitating Christ through inflicting torture and suffering upon their own bodies. Further humanising of Christ was achieved through an increased focus upon Christ's relationship with his mother, the Virgin Mary. Just as Christians sought to suffer as he did, they also sought solace and sympathy with the Virgin and the weeping mother.[8] As I will show, both Ignatius' and Teresa's methods were built on making these connections through imaginative contemplation. The *Spiritual Exercises* and *Way of Perfection* were intended as tools to cultivate devotion centred on the humanity and emotions of Christ.[9]

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[6] Derek A. Rivard, *Blessing the World: Ritual and Lay Piety in Medieval Religion* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 283.

[7] Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (London: Routledge, 1996), 47.

[8] Miri Rubin, *Emotion and Devotion: The Meaning of Mary in Medieval Religious Cultures* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009), 89.

[9] Christopher Van Gihoven, "The Theurgic Image: Ignatius of Loyola, Teresa of Avila, and the Institutional Praxis of the Counter-Reformation" (PhD diss., New York University, 2010).

Surprisingly, there is little research on the adaptation of affective piety for the early modern English Carmelites.[10] The principal scholarship of the spirituality of the English religious orders is on Augustine Baker and the Cambrai Benedictine nuns. Essential to Baker's spirituality was the rejection of set prayers, popular among early modern Catholics. Baker argued for the importance of reading pious texts, particularly the writings of the medieval mystics. Baker believed that including medieval experiences of mysticism in meditation and recollection would be more beneficial for the practice of union with God.[11] However, he considered Ignatian meditation limiting and constrictive, and thereby, less conducive to mystical union. He was an advocate for affective piety but directed the Cambrai nuns to achieve it through different means than those proposed by Ignatius and Teresa. This chapter will examine the affective character of both Ignatian and Teresian spiritualities and then demonstrate how those methods shaped the devotional lives of the Carmelite nuns to act as a springboard for mysticism in the convent.

This chapter will consider how the saints' methods were a form of "emotional practice." Proposed by Monique Scheer, she posits that using Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice in conjunction with emotions theories, such as "emotives," shows more explicitly how people learned and habituated emotional norms.[12] Teresian and Ignatian spirituality formed a religious

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[10] Although Warren has a pertinent discussion on the connections between medieval and early modern spirituality, *Embodied Word*.

[11] Jaime Goodrich, "'Attend to Me': Julian of Norwich, Margaret Gascoigne and Textual Circulation among the Cambrai Benedictines," in *Early Modern English Catholicism: Identity, Memory and Counter-Reformation*, ed. James E. Kelly and Susan Royal (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 106; Walker, *Gender and Politics*, 143-7.

[12] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 194-200; Scheer mentions these sources as well looking to practice theory as a means of emotions analysis: Catherine A. Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod, "Emotion, Discourse, and the Politics of Everyday Life," in *Language and the Politics of Emotions*, ed. Catherine A. Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-23; Fay Bound Alberti, "Medical History and

habitus, a structure in which cultures as well as personal histories shape a person'sperception of the body and mind, for the mystical experience of the Carmelites nuns. The *habitus* subconsciously shapes social actions and may affect physical attributes as well, such as accent and posture and mental attributes including mannerisms, appreciation, intuitions, and even feelings.[13] As Bourdieu explains, "the *habitus* – embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product. As such, it is what gives practices their relative autonomy with respect to external determinations of the immediate present."[14] Informed by the *habitus* actions become practices. If the *habitus* is the encompassing culture, practices are the workings of individuals within it. Bourdieu never expressly mentions emotions under practices, though as mentioned above, "feelings" are considered. Monique Scheer asserts that Bourdieu's concept of practice can be used by the history of emotions through the concept of"emotional practices." Building upon Bourdieu's *habitus*, emotions in religion become socially situated, trained, plastic, adaptive and historical.[15] Specific religious emotions, such as weeping or rapture, can be learned, practiced and are shaped by both the practitioner and their environment. How Ignatius and Teresa practice and inform their religious emotions will be explored and compared with how the nuns, through this *habitus*, also practiced religious emotions.

I first provide a brief biography of St Ignatius of Loyola. Then, an analysis of his book, *Spiritual Exercises,* will highlight the influence of affective piety in the emotional practices he used for devotion. Joseph Conwell has pointed out that, traditionally, scholars expounded the

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Emotion Theory," in *Medicine, Emotion and Disease, 1700-1950*, ed. Fay Bound Alberti (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2006), xiii-xxix.

[13] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice,* trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 52-65.

[14] Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 56.

[15] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 193.

idea that Ignatius was a "soldier-saint." He was cold, calculating, brilliantly administrative and carried himself with a steely will. Since the 1990s there has been a shift in opinion which considers Ignatius as a mystic, a "man of passion" and affectivity. He was a man deeply in love with God.[16] However, Conwell considers this a binary shift, from intellectual and rational to mystical and passionate, which is simplistic at best. I include a section of Ignatius' autobiography and entries in his one-year-long spiritual diary in order to explore the debate that his writing was rational, cold and "masculine." I will argue that Ignatius' writing was mystical and passionate, which influenced the Carmelite nuns' own mysticism. His programme of prayer and ritualised weeping will reflect a spirituality based on emotional practices. Second, I will explore the life of St Teresa of Avila, using Sir Tobie Mathew's (1577-1655) translation of her life *The Flaming Hart,* as well as her books, *The Interior Castle* and *The Way of Perfection*. There will be an emphasis on the saint's personal spiritual journey as well as her writings that were intended to guide future Carmelites under her reform. This section will focus on the elements of Teresa's teaching that informed the mystical and emotional practices of the seventeenth-century English Carmelites. Teresa's "feminine" writing will be compared to Ignatius' "masculine" text, highlighting that although they wrote in different styles, their passion and mysticism was ultimately the same.

Finally, I will discuss both methods in relation to two seventeenth-century English Carmelites, Catherine Darcy (Clare of the Annunciation, 1610-1694) and Catherine Smith (Delphine of St Joseph, 1677-1721). Passages from their entries in the Antwerp Annals, compiled from their personal papers, spiritual diaries and letters show the combined influence of the *Interior Castle* and *Spiritual Exercises*. The annals provide detailed discussions of meditations, contemplations and prayers which use the structure of Ignatius and the language

[16] Joseph F. Conwell, S.J., *Impelling Spirit: Revisiting a Founding Experience* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997), xix. This shift coincides with the growing popularity of the History of Emotions.

of Teresa. All three of these sections will show a distinct continuation of emotion practices from the affective piety made popular in the fourteenth century. Furthermore, this chapter demonstrates how early modern mystics learned, adapted and transformed these practices into a distinct experience that was material and embodied compared with medieval mysticism.

i. Ignatian Spirituality

> ANIMA CHRISTI
>
> Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
> Body of Christ, save me.
> Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
> Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
> Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
> O good Jesu, hear me;
> Within Thy wounds hide me;
> Suffer me not to be separated from Thee;
> From the malignant enemy defend me;
> In the hour of my death call me,
> And bid me come to Thee,
> That with Thy Saints I may praise Thee
> For ever and ever. Amen.[17]

In a prayer recommended by Ignatius of Loyola to the priests of the Society of Jesus, the heart of their spirituality lies in the tortured suffering of Christ's Passion. Only through the wounds of Jesus' human flesh can God's forgiveness and humanity's salvation be found. This prayer seeks solace inside the house of God, hidden deep within the soul. Only in this location, at the end of the spiritual journey can the contemplative experience self-annihilation and spiritual union with God.

[17] A well-known prayer recommended by Ignatius in the second and third Method of Prayer. Quoted from Antonio T. de Nicolas, *Powers of Imagining: Ignatius de Loyola* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 104.

Ignatius was devoted to early modern Catholic reform and, with his companions, founded the Society of Jesus. This was a religious order that was based on missionary work in the battle against the growing Protestant threat and instilling Catholic faith in all corners of the earth. Ignatius was born Íñigo López de Loyola, a Basque noble from Loyola. His early life consisted of a conventional military and courtly career. After being wounded at the siege of Pamplona when he was thirty years old, Ignatius underwent a religious conversion leading to a year living as a hermit at Manresa near Barcelona in 1522. During this time, he experienced mystical insights and sought spiritual guidance from the monastery of Montserrat. There he learnt discernment and worked on the framework of his future book *The Spiritual Exercises*. In 1540, Ignatius obtained papal approval to form a new order, the Society of Jesus, and by 1548 the *Spiritual Exercises* had passed censorship and had been approved for use by the order. Ignatius remained in Rome until his death in 1548, serving as the Superior, overseeing the order's development and writing letters of spiritual guidance to fathers of the Society, nuns, and lay people.[18]

Ignatius constructed the *Exercises* upon the principles of *devotio moderna*, the same spiritual ideals that Teresa would later discover in her life. They were designed to assist in spiritual growth so that a person might respond to the call of Christ. Ignatius wrote the *Spiritual Exercises* as an instructional manual, outlining a flexible and practical set of meditations and prayers which were meant to produce dynamic and rich spiritual experiences. As a small volume of practical instructions, the book contains prayers, meditations and contemplations, divided into four "weeks." These are not always derived of seven days each but altogether the *Exercises* should last for thirty days. Ignatius aimed the exercises towards helping the reader to discover God's will for him (or her) and to carry it out with determination. Its flexibility and

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[18] William V. Bangert, S.J., *A History of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1972), 3-9.

practicality ensured its popularity both within and outside the Society of Jesus. Hundreds of different versions over the centuries have replicated, adapted, and abridged Ignatius' original schema to diverse audiences, ultimately creating a spiritual *habitus*.[19] The structure in all versions remains the same as that Ignatius set out, consisting of meditations which are grounded in examples taken from Christ's life and Passion.[20]

The *Exercises* are a detailed, regimented methodology guided by a director to a group of practitioners. Ignatius writes as, described by Antonio de Nicolas, "not with a pen but with a hammer."[21] He states clearly, in the first week, that "this exercise [of a particular and daily examination of conscience] is performed at three different times, and there are two examinations to be made. [First], as soon as he arises in the morning the man should resolve to guard himself carefully against the particular sin or defect which he wishes to correct or amend."[22] This exacting style continues throughout the volume in order to systematically drill the spiritual method into the psyche and daily practice of the practitioner.

I will first discuss Ignatius' explanation of how to pray in an appendix to the *Exercises* called "Three Ways of Prayer." The seventeenth-century nuns in Antwerp explicitly referenced and expounded upon this document in their own writings. Ignatius included thorough descriptions behind the three methods of prayer for the practitioner. The first method was focused on the ten commandments, seven sins, three powers of the soul and the five senses of

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[19] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 216.

[20] Bangert, *A History of the Society of Jesus*, 9.

[21] Nicolas, *Powers of Imagining*, 103. It is unclear why Nicolas uses the word "hammer" in particular to describe Ignatius' writing. It invokes more than one possible meaning; there is force and brutality, but also more benign associations with carpentry and practicality. Either way, this description denotes a masculine style of writing that I have yet to see discussed in detail.

[22] Ignatius of Loyola, "Spiritual Exercises," in *Powers of Imagining: Ignatius de Loyola*, trans. and ed. Antonio T. de Nicolas (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 111.

the body. This method worked to make prayer more acceptable to the soul rather than to "give a form and method to praying."[23] How these prayers should be conducted was through careful consideration of each element of the topic. For the ten commandments, "to think over the first commandment, how I have kept it, and where I have failed."[24] After this, he or she would recite three times "Our Father" and three times "Hail Mary." If, in meditation, faults were discovered, forgiveness would be asked of God. Every commandment was treated in the same manner and subsequent topics, such as the sins soul and senses were similar in method.[25] The second way of prayer constituted contemplation of the meaning of each word of prayer. Much like the previous method, topics, or words in this case, were individually considered. The exercitant, or person undergoing the retreat, would pick any prayer, find a comfortable position for devotion, and go went through each word in that prayer and its meaning.[26] The third way of prayer was built upon the previous two and with every breath, he or she was to pray mentally:

> As he says one word of the "Our Father," or any other prayer that is being recited, so that between one breath and another single word is said. During this space of time, he is to give his full attention to the meaning of the word, or to the Person whom he is address [*sic*], or to his own unworthiness, or to the difference between the greatness of this Person or his own lowliness.[27]

[23] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 146.

[24] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 146.

[25] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 147.

[26] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 148.

[27] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 149.

As the contemplative repeated this method and progressed through the retreat, the easier it became for the soul to pray and gain intimacy with God. At the same time, the spiritual trials became harder. One exercise asked for the exercitant to imagine:

> Christ our Lord before you, hanging upon the cross. Speak with Him of how from being the Creator He became man, and how possessing eternal life, He submitted to temporal death to die for our sins. Then I shall meditate upon myself and ask, "What have I done for Christ? What am I now doing for Christ? What ought I do for Christ?" And as I see Him in this condition, hanging upon the cross, I shall meditate on the thoughts that come to my mind.[28]

Through contemplation, an understanding of Jesus' rejection of worldly attitudes, his embrace of poverty, and his profound humility were made clear. The practitioner was shown how Christ lovingly endured the contempt of humanity and dedicated himself to the fulfilment of his Father's will.[29] In the exercise, every day focused upon one element of Christ's life.[30] As the retreat progressed through the weeks, there was an increasing absorption with Christ as the nature of his own way of life is unfolded. The third week, focused on the contemplation of the Passion and Christ's suffering, with the practitioner stating: "Here I will begin with great effort to strive to grieve, to be sad, and cry."[31] The sixth day of this week focused on Jesus taken down from the cross and placed in the sepulchre. On the seventh day, the practitioners would contemplate the entire Passion from midnight to morning, being advised to consider "as frequently as possible throughout the entire day how the most Sacred Body of Christ our Lord

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[28] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 117.

[29] Bangert, *A History of the Society of Jesus*, 9.

[30] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 133.

[31] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 138-9.

remained separated and apart from His Soul, also where and how it was buried."[32] The *Exercises* outlined a rigorous programme of explicitly emotional practices in order to generate a sincere spiritual connection.[33]

The fourth week completed the spiritual journey through Christ as the exercitant walked with him in the glowing serenity of Resurrection. Ignatius called for the contemplative to consider what he or she should "offer and give to His Divine Majesty, i.e., all of his things and himself with them, as one who makes an offering with deep love," saying:

> Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. You gave all to me, to you O Lord, I return it. All is yours; dispose of it according to your Will. Give me your Love and grace, for this is enough for me.[34]

Here in the final week of the *Exercises*, the contemplative should and would give their whole self, their love and their will over to God.

The Spiritual Exercises were practical volumes made to legitimise institutional practices. At the same time, they were emotional and deeply personal. In particular, reading Ignatius' *Exercises* was much like studying a play. The performance, or practice of the piece created new meaning and showed the real impact of the work. Only the spiritual director, usually a Jesuit priest, read the text and used it to instruct his students as a group. Therefore, a spiritual retreat was a communal experience between Ignatius' meditational schema, the director and the exercitants that elicited individual encounters and responses. At the same time, it was intensely private and personal. The *Exercises* sought to purify the soul and enrich it with

[32] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 141.

[33] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 215.

[34] Ignatius, "Spiritual Exercises," 145.

intellectual, theological and narrative elements as well as with the grief, suffering, joy, and wonder of Christ's life. Through mental prayer and intense spiritual labour, the contemplative's soul literally re-lived Christ's life, including his torturous death and rapturous resurrection.

The personal writings of Ignatius are few but include an autobiography and a diary that covers the younger years of his life from 1521 to 1538. Ignatius wrote the autobiography after several Jesuits had insisted he commit his life story to paper. The diary, although deeply intimate, mirroring Anne Worsley's mystical experiences, was composed to justify an institutional decision regarding whether the Society should accept revenue. Ignatius came to a resolution only after going through repeated emotional practices of spiritual suffering.

Ignatius' narrative began in May 1521. The first paragraphs describe him as a valiant soldier defending a fortress from the French. This section detailed Ignatius' prolonged sickness, caused by a serious injury he sustained during the war. Late into the attack by the French, a shot hit his leg "breaking it completely" and badly wounding the second. Ignatius suffered multiple settings of the bones without "showing sign of pain except the clench of fists very hard."[35] Although he was returned home, Ignatius continued to worsen, not being able to eat. He was advised to confess and received the sacraments and was believed to be close to death. However, Ignatius underwent more gruesome surgeries on his leg, suffering what his narrative terms as "martyrdom", and ultimately survived.[36] Bedridden and having run out of the chivalric romances to read, Ignatius was given a life of Christ (*Vita Christi*) and a book of the lives of saints in Spanish. While reading he often stopped "to think, reasoning within himself: 'What if

[35] Ignatius of Loyola, "Autobiography," in *Powers of Imagining: Ignatius de Loyola*, trans. and ed. Antonio T. de Nicolas (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 249.

[36] Ignatius, "Autobiography," 250.

I should do what St. Frances did, what St. Dominic did?'"[37] Ignatius found that reading about saints and imagining himself on a barefoot pilgrimage to Jerusalem, inspired feelings of contentment and happiness, fuelling a discovery of "holy desires."[38] These burgeoning religious desires were confirmed by his first vision:

> One night while he was awake, he saw clearly an image of Our Lady with the holy child Jesus. From this sight he was heartened for a considerable time, and he was left with so much loathing for his whole past life and especially the things of the flesh that it seemed that all the images that were previously imprinted in his mind were removed from it.[39]

The narrative overall serves the missionary work of the Society, detailing Ignatius' travels and dealings with other people. However, the above passage highlighted an emotional intimacy that was used to legitimise his decision to pursue a holy life. An insight into his spirituality was found more clearly in the short spiritual diary. This volume covered just over a calendar year, 2 February 1544 to 27 February 1545, as Ignatius struggled with a decision regarding whether Jesuit houses should have an income or none. Ultimately, Ignatius decided that poverty was paramount and no income at all was the right answer for the Society. The writing was as methodical as the *Exercises*, although it betrays an agonising decision process of daily prayer, physical suffering and mystical experiences. `

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[37] Ignatius, "Autobiography," 250-1. I have been unsuccessful in finding a study on Ignatius' gendered language and use of early modern ideas of masculinity to bolster his narrative.

[38] Teresa's exploration of spiritual books mirrors this too. The act of reading strengthened the spiritual will and the soul.

[39] Ignatius, "Autobiography," 251.

Diary entries focused upon attendance at Mass and recorded the experience of tears, before, during or after the sacrament.[40] The first entry dated Saturday 2 February quickly noted, "profound devotion during Mass. Tears and increased confidence in Our Lady. Inclined more towards no revenue (this feeling accompanied me) throughout the day." The next day Ignatius noted, "the same (as yesterday)."[41] Most entries were short and to the point. He stated the position he was in regarding the issue over income and any emotional response. However, less than a week after the previously quoted entries, he began preparations for Mass feeling, "deep devotion and tears, and while holding speech *when I could*, feeling inclined to no revenue [italics in original]." This began as a normal entry, but Ignatius continued to consider the Society's revenue through the day, writing that:

> Soon after Mass, (I felt) devotion and not without tears, going through the elections for an hour and a half or more and putting in front of me what seemed to be better according to reason, and

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[40] Religious tears and weeping had been essential features of Christianity beginning in the Bible. Multiple scholars have discussed this source as well as the changing concept of weeping from a necessary personal communication with God to a more formalised, learned practice of holiness, including: Heather Webb, "*Lacrime Carodiali*: Cathrine of Siena on the Value of Tears," in *A Companion to Catherine of Siena*, ed. Carolyn Muessing, George Ferzoco and Beverly Mayne Kienzle (Boston: Brill, 2012), 99-112; Jessie Gutgsell, "The Gift of Tears: Weeping in the Religious Imagination," *Anglican Theological Review* 97, no. 2 (2015): 239-53l; Jeffrey A. Kottler, *The Language of Tears* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996); E. M. Cioran, *Tears and Saints* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Piroska Nagy, "Religious Weeping as Ritual in the Medieval West," in *Ritual in its own Right: Exploring the Dynamics of Transformation,* ed. Don Handelman and Galina Lindquist (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 119-137; and multiple papers in Kimberley Christine Patton and John Stratton Hawley, ed., *Holy Tears: Weeping in the Religious Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[41] Ignatius of Loyola, "Spiritual Diary," in *Powers of Imagining: Ignatius de Loyola*, trans. and ed. Antonio T. de Nicolas (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 189.

> by a stronger inclination of the will, that is, to have no revenue. *Wishing* (then) to *present this to the Father* through the meditation and prayers of the Mother and the Son, I prayed first to Her to help me with Her Son and the Father, and then prayed to the Son to help me with His Father in company with the Mother. I felt (then) within me as if I were going or were being carried away to the Father, and in this movement my hair stood on end, with a most remarkable warmth in my whole body. Following this (I had) tears and the deepest devotion //.
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> […] In the evening, for an hour and a half or more, *as I was going over the elections in the same way*, and making the election for no revenue *and experiencing devotion,* I found myself with a certain elevation of soul and a deep peace, seeing no inclination to possess anything [italics in original].[42]

This entry shows three distinct elements of Ignatius' devotion that are worth discussing. The first was his meditation. The prayers for help with his decision regarding revenue were conducted in multiple stages, through intercessors. First, he called upon the Mother to intercede with the Son and Father. Then, Ignatius with the Son to intercede with the Father, although the Mother was still present. This element of his spiritual practice emphasised the use of a formula, or procedure, in order to access God. Ignatius knew the channels he needed to go through to discover answers and he was careful to show this even in his diary. Two days later, he made another entry in which he stated that again "[he] repeated the elections and made the offering of having no income," and the day after that, Ignatius wrote that, "considering all aspects of the elections, (and with) my mind made up, and focusing on the reasons I had written down to consider, I prayed to our Lady, and then to the Son and to the Father, to give me their Spirit to consider and discern."[43] Like the *Exercises*, Ignatius worked through a process focused on each individual step to reach the second element, his mystical experience.

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[42] Ignatius, "Spiritual Diary," 190.

[43] Ignatius, "Spiritual Diary," 191.

Ignatius included mystical experience as evidence of the powerful deliberation he made on the issue of the house's revenue, as Anne Worsley would similarly do in the following century. Although the year-long documentation of his struggle with this problem added weight to his final choice, the inclusion of mystical experiences, like the feeling of being carried towards God and his hair standing on end, gave spiritual and divine legitimacy. The third element of interest and the one most closely related to mysticism was that of devotion, tears and water, which featured in almost all diary entries for the year. These terms were regularly recorded as signifiers for his spiritual experience. Although Ignatius did not indicate the meaning of his continued use of "devotion," it can be read as singularly emotional. Often paired with "tears" or "warmth," "devotion" denoted a state of spiritual being that occurred during and after prayer or meditation. Ignatius was therefore using "devotion" to communicate complicated spiritual emotions through his simple writing style. His writing indicated that he often cried. However, Ignatius' transition between tears and weeping, and back again, suggested less of a torrent and more the ritualised nature of his lament. Ignatius not only documented the times he wept but often referred to his "desire to weep," and "tendency to weep."[44] In so doing, he had cultivated a sincere emotional performance through repeated practices.[45]

In the Spanish context, William Christian Jr has asserted, public weeping in early modern Spain was highly performative although that was not unique for the time or place. Weeping was frequently mentioned in the Bible, in the lives of the desert fathers and into the Middle Ages, and it was considered in the practice of piety, that the "vulnerability, expressed through weeping, was the 'only way toward holiness.'"[46] By the early modern period, weeping

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[44] Ignatius, "Spiritual Diary," 190-1.

[45] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 215.

[46] Gutgsell, "Gift of Tears," 241.

had become a ritualised public display. It was a physical demonstration of the person's feelings and could excite others, connecting the private to the collective.[47] The performance and provocation of religious weeping was essential as a signifier of legitimate spiritual experience. Stemming from affective piety, the emotionality of a person's relationship with Christ, and his humanity, was a crucial element in early modern Catholic spirituality.

Eight days into the diary, Ignatius recorded a mystical event which led to an experience of clarity regarding his revenue "problem," writing:

> At this point […] I felt greater devotion, and lost all desire to consider the matter further. *With* tears and sobbing, I made the offering of no revenue, on my knees, to the Father. The tears (were) flowing down my face, sobbing as I made the offering, and following it, so that I could hardly stand up for all the sobs and tears of devotion and the grace I received. […] Shortly after this, as I walked and recalled what had taken place, I felt a fresh inner motion to devotion and tears // [italics in original].[48]

This entry is visceral in its imagery of the sobbing Ignatius on his knees. The intensity he felt in this insight was ardently described even in his characteristically simple style. Ignatius repeated this emotional language throughout the diary, including that "[he] *was covered* with such a flood of tears, and so intense a devotion, sobbings, and spiritual gifts [italics in original]."[49] Ignatius invoked the medieval meaning of tears as a path to holiness as a spiritual

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[47] William A. Christian Jr., "Provoked Religious Weeping in Early Modern Spain," in *Religion and Emotion: Approaches and Interpretations*, ed. John Corrigan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 33.

[48] Ignatius, "Spiritual Diary," 192.

[49] Ignatius, "Spiritual Diary," 194.

tool in order to ascertain temporal issues within the order. He continued in a later entry, dated Sunday 31 March 1544, writing:

> I thought that humility, reverence, and surrender should not be fearful but loving, and this was so firmly established in my soul that I said confidently: "Give me a loving humility, and thus reverence and surrender." I received fresh visitations in these words. I also resisted tears to turn my attention to this loving humility, etc.[50]

Ignatius now contrasts his earlier entries in that he resists tears in order to turn to "loving humility." The tears acted as his private conduit to God, and through his diary a public display of piety and sanctity, so that now he had received God's words they were no longer needed.

The *Spiritual Exercises* were a crucial influence on many seventeenth-century nuns' devotional practice, not only Carmelites. Ignatius' spiritual methodology was a natural extension of the *habitus* formed from affective piety, meditating on the suffering and humanity of Christ emotionally tied the practitioner to Him. The *Exercises* made the emotional practices simple and flexible as a means to holy perfection. Through the retreats, practitioners learned, repeated and memorised emotional performances in order to interiorise and strengthen their relationship to Christ. Further, Ignatius' personal writing was reflected in both St Teresa of Avila and Anne Worsley's writings, especially in his physical sickness, suffering and process through an institutional dilemma. The women's writing and actions can be linked to Ignatius both in terms of spiritual mentor but also as a template to legitimise their own mystical experiences and religious governance. Ignatius' own rhetoric of tears showed the importance of linking the personal, vulnerable practice of piety with an acceptable public performance of sanctity to legitimise mysticism in the early modern Church.

[50] Ignatius, "Spiritual Diary," 222.

ii. Teresian Spirituality

St Teresa of Avila's reform of the Carmelite order reflected her own turn inwards, to mental prayer and recollection, for a deeper relationship with Christ. This spiritual journey of her personal contemplative life was documented for future Carmelites in numerous books. Teresa grew up in a privileged household and her writing reflected a high level of education and reading. She was in fact an extensive reader, often mentioning that in her early years she needed a book in her hand to truly connect with God. She did this in order to strengthen her ability for recollection without textual aids which she saw as evidence of her lack of piety. This section will explore her autobiography, her understanding of the spiritual journey in *The Interior Castle* and how she formed her own style of interior spirituality – one that was informed by the *habitus* of affective piety and Ignatius of Loyola. This will demonstrate not only her direct influence on the seventeenth-century English Carmelites, but also a fundamental early modern shift in female mysticism. Teresa stressed the importance of material aids to devotion. Their use shaped her spirituality through spatial metaphors that brought God into the human soul, in the physical presence of the human body, in contradistinction to medieval mysticism where the mystic was transported from the earthly to the heavenly realm.

Teresa was born on 28 March 1515 to a wealthy merchant family in Toledo, located in the kingdom of Leon-Castille. The family were *converso*, Christian converts with Jewish origin. Because of their wealth, Teresa's father Don Alonso Sánchez de Capeda purchased noble status and moved the family to Avila. However, their religious and noble status were always under question and the death of her mother when Teresa was just twelve years old added to the turmoil of her childhood. Don Alonso placed her in a school for noble girls run by Augustinian nuns in Avila. During her stay and under the guidance of a loving nun, Teresa

began to consider becoming a nun. Teresa read extensively on the subject and the *Letters* of St Jerome finally convinced her of her vocation. Her father did not approve and wanted her to marry, so Teresa secretly left home to join the Carmelite convent of the Incarnation in Avila, entering on 2 November 1535. Eventually, Don Alonso acquiesced to her chosen vocation and Teresa professed her vows two years later.[51]

The first ten years of Teresa's vocation were plagued with illness and self-doubt, much like Ignatius and his extended war injury. Teresa regretted that previously she had spent so much time in the pursuit of worldly things. Even after her monastic profession, she remained attracted to worldly friendships, gossip and vanity.[52] Like her mother before her, Teresa had enjoyed "Bookes of *Cavalleria*, or vaine histories," in her teenage years which she believed later in life to have drawn her away from her childhood devotion.[53] As a young child, Teresa and her brother had read many Lives of saints. At one point they had even run away from home to be "amongst the *Mores*," so that they could suffer martyrdom, although Teresa was quick to point out her longing to be a martyr was less out of love for God and more the fancies of a young child.[54] This was a common trope stemming from St Augustine's prototype, which featured irreligious and dissolute youth later reformed by finding the right path to God. Yet

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[51] Andrea Janelle Dickens, *Female Mystic: Great Women Thinkers of the Middle Ages* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 179-80; Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa*.

[52] Beverly J. Lanzetta, "Wound of Love: Feminine Theosis and Embodied Mysticism in Teresa of Avila," in *The Participatory Turn: Spirituality, Mysticism, Religious Studies*, ed. Jorge N. Ferrer and Jacob H. Sherman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 226; Teresa describes it as "[beginning] from one past time, to another; from one vanitie, to another; and from one occasion, to another, to cast my self deeply, into very great occasions; and to carrie my soule so disordered, upon manie absurdities, that already, I grew even ashamed, to approach towards God." in *The Flaming Hart,* 59.

[53] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart,* 7.

[54] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart,* 3.

amidst her troubled youth, there were seeds of future sanctity. Teresa recalled how afterwards she and her brother found themselves:

> Much amazed, to perceave, in those things, which we read, that both the Paine, and Glorie, of the next life, was to last for ever; and we chanced, to speake often, of this particular; and we tooke pleasure, in repeating these words, many times; For ever, For ever, For ever; and by continuing to pronounce them, long, and often, our Lord was pleased, to imprint the way of Truth, upon my heart, in that verie infancie of mine.[55]

Teresa presented a narrative of her younger self that legitimised her religious endeavours, despite personal conflict with her worldly desires. She acknowledged that from a young age, she had practiced a pure form of spirituality, meaning with a child's innocence, with her brother. The terminology, at least in Tobie Mathews' translation, of "imprint" is something physical and long-lasting. The "truth" of God was imprinted onto Teresa's soul from childhood. Furthermore, in the repetition of an imagined state in heaven, one that consisted of both glory and pain, the children began to practice a rudimentary, but highly personal, version of affective piety. Perhaps gleaned from the saintly lives she read or simply learned from daily Catholic life, Teresa imagined, took pleasure in and repeated this meditative connection to God, not just of his glory but also of his pain – the combination of both invoking the suffering of Christ in the Passion. Not simply a childhood anecdote, this passage served Teresa's religious ideals, shaped the *habitus* for her emotional practices, and assured her confessors and superiors of her pious nature.

Teresa remained in a state of guilt and doubt about her spiritual life at the convent even when she began to experience visions for the first time at the age of forty. After being directed

[55] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 4.

to the Jesuit College of San Gil to evaluate whether the nature of her mystical experience was divine or diabolical, she was deemed to be directed by God and instructed in Jesuit spiritual practices. Under Jesuit guidance, Teresa felt empowered by the nature of her visions to build the relationship she longed for with Christ. Although some priests were concerned with her behaviour, Jesuits such as Father Francis Borgia (d. 1572) defended her. Eventually Teresa's mystical experiences led to her role as a monastic reformer. Receiving a vision of hell and the place demons had prepared for her if she failed her spiritual journey, Teresa sought to establish her own reformed convent.[56] On the experience of those torments in hell, Teresa stated, "it hath benefitted me very much, both towards the making me loose all feare, and care, concerning tribulations, and contradictions of this life; as also to give me strength, towards the enduring them; and finally, to render thankes to our Blessed Lord for delivering me (as I now hope) from those terrible, and perpetuall torments."[57] Jodi Bilinkoff has argued that Teresa's drive to reform the order came out of missionary thoughts propelled by Jesuit learning and fears of French Calvinism in France and the Low Countries. Teresa sought to amend Protestant religious violence through prayer and penitence, in what Bilinkoff states was as an "apostolate of prayer, which to Teresa was as powerful a weapon against heresy as preaching, and more effective than the sword."[58] Bilinkoff's argument is convincing and explains in part why Teresa sought to reform the order; the threat of iconoclasm and religious violence was very real. But it was also apparent that Teresa's intense vision of her place in hell, one where she felt "that interior kind of fire and that unspeakable despaire, upon those intolerable torments, and

[56] This intervention by mystical experience is evident throughout women mystic and nun's life texts as a force for action.

[57] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 475.

[58] Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa*, 134.

sorrows," was a personal catalyst for her decision to found her own religious house.[59] The two compulsions, one for Catholic missionary work and the other for her own salvation, worked simultaneously to propel Teresa towards her religious goals. After receiving permission from the Prior General of the Carmelite Order, Teresa toured Spain extensively and by her death in 1582 she had established fourteen discalced Carmelite houses.[60]

Despite her reform success, Teresa's work was consistently scrutinised by her superiors and the Spanish Inquisition. It is universally agreed by historians of early modern Spain that an intense misogyny persisted socially, politically and spiritually.[61] As Gillian Ahlgren has noted, Spain aligned itself with the Tridentine agenda and became attached to "an idiosyncratic orthodoxy that evolved slowly, from a brand of humanism that allowed for individual theological speculation and spiritual experimentation to a more rigid model of clerical catechetical control that in many ways discouraged the 'new spirituality,' with its emphasis on mental prayer."[62] This orthodoxy placed all spiritual authority in the male clergy. Furthermore, fifteenth-century Spanish authors and ecclesiastical figures were engaged in the construction of a gender ideology. Theological writings centred on "womanhood" characterised women as "little women" or *mujercitas*, a term that "signalled women's political, social, and spiritual

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[59] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 473.

[60] Rowan Williams, *Teresa of Avila* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1991), 7.

[61] Weber, *Teresa of Avila*; Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa*; Ahlgren, *Teresa of Avila and the Politics of Sanctity*; Gillian T. W. Ahlgren, "Purification and Images of Water in the Mystical Theology of Teresa of Jesus," *Mystics Quarterly* 16, no.3 (1990): 143-151; Gillian T. W. Ahlgren, "Negotiating Sanctity: Holy Women in Sixteenth-Century Spain," *Church History* 64, no.3 (1995): 373-388; Mary Margaret Anderson, "Thy Word In Me: On the Prayer of Union in St. Teresa of Avila's Interior Castle," *Harvard Theological Review* 99, no. 3 (2006): 329-354.

[62] Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 6.

powerlessness."[63] By the sixteenth century, women had lost considerable control over their lives and religious women's experiences were subject to increased scrutiny. In 1599, heretics, whose beliefs overlapped with Protestantism, were discovered in Spain which caused the Inquisition to become more suspicious of practices they saw as outside doctrinal purity, including meditation and mental prayer, even within the Church.[64] Women were particularly targeted by the Inquisition because "weak women," might be easily tricked by the Devil through visionary experience.

Teresa of Avila was not immune to this surveillance which saw her writing censored, her spirituality scrutinised, and her leadership of reform continually questioned. Teresa's constant breaking of strict enclosure, due to the foundation of new Carmelite houses, garnered the attention of one novice who complained about her conduct to the Inquisition. The novice alleged that Teresa had initiated lurid sexual improprieties for which she was investigated and finally exonerated.[65] Suspicion of her work continued after her death with numerous critics coming forth as her followers campaigned for her sainthood. Eventually Teresa earned their respect. As one critic concluded, "this woman was not a deceiver."[66] In 1622, forty years after her death and a long campaign, St Teresa of Avila was canonised by Pope Gregory XV. As a saint and leader of Catholic reform who largely championed Tridentine law, Teresa of Avila became a fundamental figure of authority in early modern Catholicism.

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[63] Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 7.

[64] Matthew C. Bagger, *Religious Experience, Justification, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 150.

[65] Bagger, *Religious Experience*, 151.

[66] Antonio Pérez-Romero, *Subversion and Liberation in the Writings of St. Teresa of Avila* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996), 208.

Teresa was a prolific writer and after her death her published works circulated far beyond the Carmelite order. Her first book, *The Book of Her Life*, detailed and explained the gifts, usually in the form of visions, God had given her. Teresa's Jesuit confessor had requested this work to better understand and discern the nature of her mystical experiences. Due to this, and the suspicion surrounding visions from the Inquisition, Teresa adopted a rhetoric that justified her spiritual experiences to the clerical authorities. Although Teresa adopted the language of self-deprecation, consistently referring to her weakness and lack of understanding, it was a deliberate act and a common trope in female religious writing. Antonio Pérez-Romero notes how Alonso de la Fuente, a contemporary critic of Teresa, had picked up on what Weber terms the saint's "rhetoric of humility." Teresa used the language of being humble to divert attention from her taking on roles that women traditionally could not undertake.[67] Ahlgren speaks similarly on Teresa's rhetoric of humility but stresses the authority Teresa gained from her visions, stating "by referring to things she claims God has actually said to her, Teresa also used divine authority to justify her words."[68] Further, Teresa's spontaneous and humble writing style strengthened her justification that the metaphors and writing strategies she used were revealed to her by God, or that he had approved. Ahlgren shows that Teresa's rhetorical strategies "appealed to the central paradox of Christianity: God upholds the lowly."[69] As Virginia Gutierrez Berner points out, "the contrast between self-humility and God's authority is a powerful way of asserting its own truth."[70]

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[67] Pérez-Romero, *Subversion and Liberation*, 197.

[68] Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 81.

[69] Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 82-3.

[70] Virginia Gutierrez Berner, "Mysticism and the Inquisition in Sixteenth Century Spain" (PhD diss., State University New York at Buffalo, 2010), 74.

Weber goes further than the idea that Teresa was writing for her superiors, considering that she wrote not just as a woman "but rather, perhaps Teresa wrote as she believed women were perceived to *speak*."[71] She spoke directly to the readers she intended to have: women. Although Teresa's *Life* was meant to justify her visions to her superiors, her remaining writing was meant for the instruction and guidance of Carmelite nuns. Therefore, Teresa's rhetoric was arguably structured in a way that women would understand and respond to as literature made by and for a feminine audience. Weber's argument is significant because it broke through centuries of misogyny in reading Teresa's works and highlighted the agency with which religious women wrote, even in periods of intense suspicion. Her writing strategies were not entirely new, as medieval women mystics often adopted the same rhetoric of humility, but Teresa went further, writing specifically for women in a way that women understood and spoke themselves. In this way, Teresa's writing influenced generations of Carmelite nuns and coloured how they wrote their own spiritual experiences.

In *The Book of Her Life*, Teresa began to form her spiritual method based on prayer, imagination and meditation.[72] She stressed the difficulties she had at the beginning of her spiritual journey and gave detailed explanations of the ways in which she fought against her insecurities and spiritual shortcomings. During her aforementioned illness, Teresa took up extensive reading and mentioned that one uncle "gave [her] a certaine Booke, which is called, The third A.B.C.; which treats of the manner of Prayer with Recollection."[73] The book referred to was Francisco De Osuna's *Third Spiritual Alphabet*, which espoused the ideas and values

[71] Weber, *Teresa of Avila*, 11. Italics in the original.

[72] In this thesis, I will use Sir Tobie Matthew's seventeenth-century translation as it was specifically made for the English Carmelites and would have been the text that those nuns would have referred.

[73] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 27.

of the *devotio moderna*.[74] Teresa soon found that the act of reading about prayer made her own relationship with Christ stronger. It was an emotional practice made possible through the embodied, the physical act of reading a book.[75] She admitted that she found trouble in recollection itself in terms of picturing Christ in her mind. As she detailed the story of her young self, we see a carefully composed narrative that would aid future women, and men, starting on the same spiritual journey:

> I procured, the best I could, to carry our Lord, who is our true Good, still present with me; and even within me; and this was the manner of my prayer. If I thought upon anie passage or Mysterie, I represented it, to the interior of myself; and other times, I spent in reading good Bookes; which was all the recreation that I had.[76]

At first Teresa notes the physical relationship she desired with God through the material conduit of the prayer book. This was reminiscent of the *habitus* of medieval affective piety, which used reflective contemplation on the body and suffering of Christ to forge a personal relationship with God. By focusing on certain passages, Teresa could get past the interior barriers she struggled with using the author's words to build the connections within her mind. As Teresa worked on this connection, she began to incorporate the aid of material images, paintings, which were popular in affective piety focusing on Christ as the "Man of Sorrows."

[74] Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa*, 116. It should be noted that, among other vernacular spiritual books, Osuna's *The Spiritual Alphabet* was placed on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* in 1599. These were publications deemed to be heretical and banned by the Roman Catholic Church.

[75] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 210.

[76] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 29.

> But now, my Soule was already growne, to be very wearie; and yet, the ill habits, which I had made, & the ill customes, which I had used, would not permit her, to be unwearied, and take rest. It hapned to me one day, upon my going into the Oratorie, that I saw a Picture […] The Picture was of Christ our Lord, full of wounds, & soares; and it was so devoutly made, that, when I looked upon it, it moved me much; for it represented very well, what he had endured for us. And the sense of the little gratitude to our Lord, which I had conceaved, and expressed, for those wounds of his, was such, that me thought, my verie hart, did even splitt. And I cast my self earnestly downe, neer the Picture, with a great showre of teares, beseeching our Lord humbly, and earnestly, that he would strengthen me so farre, once for all; as that, at length, I might offend him no more.[77]

The literal representation of Christ's wounds moved Teresa so intensely she broke down in tears. In this example she specifically adopted affective piety, seeing the suffering of Christ and being reminded of His humanity. She continued to describe how she came back to that image again and again, stressing the importance of incorporating such imagery into recollection.[78] Furthermore, this anecdote highlights her struggle and legitimised those of her readers; Teresa's soul had grown weary with poor habits and customs but this spiritual connection with a material object reinvigorated her spirituality. Here she provided an important lesson for her readers, how progress could be made and lost, but there were always strategies to spiritually refocus. Teresa's spiritual practice focusing on Christ's humanity and stressing the importance of refocusing mirrors that of Ignatius. Further, it indicated how her method was explicitly based on emotional practices – the practitioner had to habituate an emotional connection to Christ.[79]

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[77] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 98-9.

[78] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 99-100.

[79] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 200.

At the Jesuit College of San Gil, Teresa took on her first Jesuit confessor who introduced her to *The Spiritual Exercises* and a program of systematic mortification, a practice of "dying to the world" through repeated punishment of the body and mind. This new spiritual initiative reinvigorated Teresa, who wrote of this time that she,

> beganne to grow to carry a new, and fresh kind of love, towards the most Sacred Humanitie of our Blessed Lord; and my Prayer beganne to settle it self, like a Building, which now had morter in it, that might make the parts stick together; and I beganne also, to incline my self more, to the doing of Penance, wherein I was growne a little slack, by reason of my so great infirmities. For, that holie man, to whome I made my Confession, told me, that some kindes of Penance, which he named, would doe me no hurt; […] He willed me also, to doe certaine acts of Mortification, which were not very pleasing to me; though yet, I went through with them all.[80]

Once again Teresa invoked affective piety through the humanity of Christ. Teresa stressed the introduction of Jesuit methods and this focus on Christ as the "foundation" for her practice in prayer. Although she did not necessarily enjoy the mortification aspect of this practice, it proved essential to her continued, successful experience of prayer. By meditating on Christ's suffering as well as experiencing that pain herself the spiritual and emotional connection to God was strengthened. As Scheer states, "Christian practices of penance […] are not viewed as expressing a feeling of ruefulness or repentance that exists (or perhaps does not) prior to the act, but rather as a means of achieving an embodied experience of regret (whether it succeeds or not). Penance can mobilise the body in varying ways, [and the results of harnessing negative

[80] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 289 (389).

emotions] are evidence of ways in which pain and suffering can be agentive."[81] Furthermore, Teresa used the metaphor of "building" that would distinctly mark her writing and spiritual methods. She began to understand her spirituality as something that could be stable, tangible and could be built upon – like a house with bricks and mortar. This metaphor was simple, but it showed a post-Reformation need for security and an emphasis on inviting God into the human body, such as he did in Christ.

In Teresa's narrative of her life, she covered in detail the spiritual milestones she worked towards which served her narrative of legitimisation. She suffered both spiritually and physically, invoking the language of affective piety, reminiscent of Christ, the saints she read as a girl, and Ignatius of Loyola. Teresa's life also served as a guide to the women who would find inspiration and solace in her writing. Teresa was not afraid to highlight times when she struggled in her prayer, especially in the beginning when she could not achieve her goals without the aid of books and images. This also included periods when she had progressed but found herself falling back as poor habits and health diverted her attention. Despite these setbacks, Teresa explained how she focused her mind and continued her spiritual journey stronger than before. Throughout her writing, Teresa repeated the importance of practice in mental prayer. This shows us that in the development of early modern mysticism, those experiences were learned and practiced, not spontaneous gifts from God. Mystical visions were earned through suffering, as Christ did, and intense contemplation which Teresa taught could be aided through reading and following the Jesuit teachings.

Teresa's next books focused on the spiritual methods she wished her sisters to use as guides. *The Interior Castle* and *The Way of Perfection* both served to clarify aspects of mental prayer and included directions for a life of prayer.[82] Here I will focus on the *Castle* as the

[81] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 210.

[82] Dickens, *Female Mystic*, 181-2.

exemplary text.[83] As shown through the formative moments in the development of her spirituality, Teresa's ultimate focus was upon carrying God with her in all things. This informed her prayer, method and reading. *Castle* was written in 1577 after an encounter with the Inquisition. Teresa was compelled by God to write a text outlining the theological background of her contemplative practices and provide a guide for the discalced Carmelites to follow. The *Castle* explained how the interior self was composed of a castle of seven mansions. In this text we see the culmination of her building metaphor. Within those seven were countless rooms or dwellings. Teresa explained that all seven mansions must be explored in the spiritual journey to reach the centre, the soul, and noted the perils and promises of the journey to the reader.[84]

The castle was described as made of diamond or clear crystal; it was completely transparent and the soul at the centre, radiating God's light, could always be seen.[85] Although there were only seven mansions to traverse, the journey was spiritually dangerous to navigate. "There are many ways in which souls enter them [rooms in the castle], always with good intentions; but as the devil's intentions are always very bad, he has many legions of evil spirits in each room to prevent souls from passing from one to another, and as we, poor souls, fail to realise this, we are tricked by all kinds of deceptions."[86] Teresa's work was a map to guide the reader through these trials and tribulations. The spatial quality of the castle suggested a spherical construct in which, "there are many dwelling places; some up above, others down

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[83] Space constraints limit me to choose a single text in this section. Here I chose the text that most represents Teresa of Avila's methods that I believe the seventeenth-century Teresians exemplify.

[84] A. Katherine Grieb, "Teresa of Avila: The Interior Castle," *Theology Today* 62 (2005): 230.

[85] Teresa of Avila, "Interior Castle," in *The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1957), 201.

[86] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 210.

below, others to the sides."[87] Rowan Williams argues that this suggests the contemplative is repeatedly faced with choices "about which direction to take," but despite the Castle's transparent, crystal-like structure, they can only see enough to know God is there. Because of the many chambers they cannot know "very securely how many separate [them] from the deceptively visible centre."[88] Looking at Teresa's own path, it is right to consider that the spherical nature of the Castle, and the "many ways" a soul enters them suggests there are multiple choices. She explained that no one person can make the same journey towards the centre. This does not mean the contemplative cannot know how many chambers separate them from God, Teresa has specifically said there were seven. For her, the building in which the soul resides was secure, made stronger through prayer, a Castle made with diamond bricks and mortar. The centre was never "deceptively" visible, and, for the soul, the path was clear. It was the devil's intercession and deception within the chambers that made the journey perilous. These dwelling places were traversed through life's lows ("down below") or life's highs ("up above"), or possibly just achieved through ordinary daily practice ("to the sides"). Despite this, the contemplative's demons must be realised at every stage. Due to its spherical nature, it was also possible to fall backwards, through sin and doubt, so that mansions must be repeated.

Teresa's *Castle* was carefully worded to invite the reader to reflect upon the nature of the soul and the body, a form of emotional practice.[89] The Castle was the soul itself, strong and stable, the journey through the chambers was simply to reach its perfection. The body was permeable and brittle, through which the devil could crawl inside. The crystalline construct of the castle "emerges as a dialectical image that holds, at once, inside and outside, singularity

[87] Williams, *Teresa*, 114.

[88] Williams, *Teresa*, 114.

[89] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 218.

and multiplicity, materiality and ethereality."[90] Thus the metaphorical narrative is transformed, through mental prayer, into an embodied double interiority, "articulating that 'we ourselves are the castle,' and advising that the soul need enter within itself."[91] The castle was therefore a useful image for contemplation of the spiritual journey as well as a theological construction to reflect on by itself. The seven mansions contained in the castle described the course of the mystical life. As the soul progressed from the First Mansion to the Seventh it was transformed from a sinful creature to the mystical bride.[92]

The First Mansion began with a meditation on the human soul and a lament that more effort was not taken to perfect it; "O souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ! Learn to understand yourselves and take pity on yourselves! Surely, if you understand your own natures, it is impossible that you will not strive to remove the pitch which blackens the crystal?"[93] The souls in this stage had grace but were still in love with occasions of sin. Learning humility here must be disciplined and was a lengthy process. This was reminiscent to Ignatius' tear diary in which he learned loving humility through the act of weeping.

The Second Mansion was of the Practice of Prayer.[94] The soul was eager to travel further into the castle and take every opportunity to advance. It was still not secure from the sins of the outside world, and they are harder exactly because the soul is less paralysed than in the first. Before it was mute and deaf, but now the soul could hear the continual calls of God, "and this voice of His is so sweet that the poor soul is consumed with grief at being unable to

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[90] Anderson, "Thy Word in Me," 335.

[91] Anderson, "They Word in Me," 336.

[92] E. Allison Peers, *The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1957), 190.

[93] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 206.

[94] Teresa is quick to state at the beginning of this chapter that much of what she wants to say about prayer is already explained in her *Life,* as previously discussed in this chapter. Teresa of Avila, "Interior Castle," 213.

do His bidding immediately; and thus, as I say, it suffers more than it if could not hear Him. […] His appeals came through the conversations of good people, or from sermons, or through the reading of good books."[95] Teresa repeats the importance of books and material, bodily connections to God.

The Third Mansion was the Exemplary Life. Teresa began with reminding the reader not to trust their own strength or the virtues they have acquired so far as there was still the possibility to relapse. Teresa stressed that the reader should believe they advanced slowly, that their sisters were progressing faster, to consider themselves worse than anyone else because only through this awareness could someone progress further, compared to those who languish thinking they were already virtuous enough.

The Fourth Mansion began to tip the balance between the soul's part in the journey and God's. Here God and his supernatural light took a greater role. The graces the soul worked to achieve were referred to as Prayer of Quiet in Teresa's *Life.* Here she used the imagery of the fountain in which the water of life flowed directly from the source (God). Teresa explained that this direct stream ran continually to the soul, thus never needing conduits to carry the water which "corresponds to the spiritual sweetness which, as I say, is produced by meditation. It reaches us by way of the thoughts; we meditate upon created things and fatigue the understanding; and when at last, by means of our own efforts, it comes, the satisfaction which it brings to the soul fills the basin."[96] The use of water was reminiscent of Ignatius' tear diary in which flowing tears and the vulnerability they denoted acted as a conduit to God.

[95] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 214.

[96] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 237. For a further discussion on Teresa's use of water see: Ahlgren, "Purification and Images of Water," 143-151.

"Oh, sisters! How shall I ever be able to tell you of the riches and the treasures and the delights which are to be found in the fifth Mansions?"[97] This is the stage of the castle in which the soul was in the state of union or the spiritual betrothal. Teresa explained divine union through her most famous metaphor, the silkworm:

> You will have heard of the wonderful way in which silk is made – a way which no one could invent but God – and how it comes from a kind of seed which looks like tiny peppercorns (I have never seen this, but only heard of it, so if it is incorrect in any way the fault is not mine). When the warm weather comes, and the mulberry-trees begin to show leaf, this seed starts to take life; until it has this sustenance, on which it feeds, it is as dead. The silkworms feed on the mulberry-leaves until they are fully-grown, when people put down twigs, upon which, with their tiny mouths, they start spinning silk, making themselves very tight little cocoons, in which they bury themselves. Then, finally, the worm, which was large and ugly, comes right out of the cocoon a beautiful white butterfly.[98]

Teresa's metaphor saw the soul as the silkworm which nourished itself with spiritual practices, such as "frequent confessions, good books and sermons."[99] Then the worm started to spin its silk and built the house in which it would die. Spiritual perfection was considered "dying to the world", the Castle itself was a metaphor on how to die a holy death. By spinning the cocoon, the soul renounced self-love, self-will and the attachment to earthly things. "Then we shall see God and shall ourselves be as completely hidden in His greatness as is this little worm in its

[97] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 247.

[98] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 253.

[99] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 254; These are essentially "outside" sources of emotional practice that were used to make religious emotions embodied, Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 209.

cocoon."[100] In the previous mansions, the soul progressively lost its infirmities. It gained hearing, speech, and here it in the fifth mansion it gained sight. Through these senses the soul could finally experience, a limited form of, divine union.

The Sixth Mansion described the newly betrothed Bride and her Beloved finally meeting. Intimacy grew as they saw each other for longer periods of time, as did the increasing favours and afflictions the soul was given. Despite suffering, the soul had no desire to be free, only to progress and enter the final mansion.

The Seventh Mansion contained the Spiritual Marriage. Teresa described how the soul was finally brought into this place through an "intellectual" vision in which truth was revealed through the Holy Trinity split into three persons, "the spirit becomes enkindled and is illumined, as it were, by a cloud of the greatest brightness. It sees these three Persons, individually, and yet, by a wonderful kind of knowledge which is given to it, the soul realises that most certainly and truly all these three Persons are one Substance and one Power and one Knowledge and one God alone."[101] Teresa was quick to note that it should not be assumed that this was from her own experience.[102] Yet her writing in the Seventh Mansion is powerfully moving and describes the wonders God would bestow at the end of the spiritual journey.

A. Katherine Grieb has argued that by the sixteenth century the focus on Christ's human body was no longer the norm, stating that "it had become fashionable in some schools of thought to counsel those pursuing the contemplative life that they must move beyond the humanity of Jesus in order to ascend the mystical ladder. Contemplatives were to avoid focusing on corporeal images of the human Jesus, which were thought to hinder their progress

[100] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 254-5.

[101] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 331.

[102] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 329-30.

to the higher realms of adoration of God."[103] She continues stating that, Teresa's writing in the seventh chapter of the sixth mansions "turns the false anthropological theology of excessive interiority on its head, refusing to allow contemplatives to escape from the cross and its way of suffering, or from the word and the neighbour whom God commands us to love."[104] As a New Testament scholar, and not one who usually focuses on mystical literature, Grieb might not be aware of the continued importance of the Passion to mystical writers beyond Teresa.[105]

When Teresa discussed the Passion in the Sixth Mansion, she reflected on individual's choice to avoid meditation on Christ, stating, "Some souls […] imagine that they cannot dwell upon the Passion, in which case they will be able still less [*sic*] to meditate upon the most sacred Virgin and the lives of the saints, the remembrance of whom brings us such great profit and encouragement."[106] Teresa continued in bafflement as to why someone would not understand the connection the mortal body gave to God through "the most sacred Humanity of Our Lord Jesus Christ."[107] Teresa returned to her own experiences of the graces bestowed upon her through meditation on Christ's Passion throughout *Castle*. For example in the Fourth Mansion, spoken directly to the reader, Teresa explained: "My own experience of this state – I mean of these favours and this sweetness in meditation – was that, if I began to weep over the Passion, I could not stop until I had a splitting headache; and the same thing happened when I wept for my sins. This was a great grace granted me by Our Lord."[108] Meditating on the

[103] Grieb, "Teresa of Avila," 232.

[104] Grieb, "Teresa of Avila," 232.

[105] Furthermore, it was a popular motif for Jesuits, for ordinary Catholic devotion, Moravians, mainstream contemporary art, and even for many Protestants who wished to imitate Christ.

[106] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 304.

[107] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 305.

[108] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 232.

humanity of Christ and his suffering, enkindled by her first sight of the painting of the Passion mentioned above in her *Life,* was the driving force for the soul. This was the kind of prayer, whether it began "in the Garden and Crucifixion," or focused upon "the mystery [of Jesus' arrest], meditating in detail upon the points," that was the most admirable and meritorious.[109] Through Teresa's direction of the labour needed in the Sixth Mansion, she emphasized that God's greatest gift to humanity was his son and it was only he, Jesus, that could lead souls to spiritual fulfilment.

> I know that the most sublime kind of prayer will be no obstacle to it and I believe omission to practise it often would be a great mistake. […] The good Jesus is too good company for us to forsake Him and His most sacred Mother. He is very glad when we grieve or His afflictions although sometimes we may be forsaking our own pleasures and consolations in order to do so – though for that matter, daughters, consolations in prayer are not so frequent that there is not time for everything. If anyone told me that she experienced them continuously (I mean so continuously that she could never meditate in the way I have described) I should consider it suspicious. Keep on with your meditation, then, and endeavour to be free from this error, and make every effort to avoid this absorption.[110]

St Teresa of Avila's texts built upon those of the female mystics and saints before her, to frame the narrative of her life and her spiritual guidebooks. Teresa also adapted the themes of Ignatius of Loyola in legitimising her reform of the Carmelite order and experience of mysticism. The Jesuits had alleviated her distress over the nature of her mystical visions and taught her how to strengthen and build her spirituality. This spiritual suffering as well as her physical illnesses

[109] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 307.

[110] Teresa, "Interior Castle," 308.

were a common trope on the journey to holiness, one that would be further emulated by Anne Worsley in the seventeenth century. Teresa's spiritual books written for the Carmelite nuns were practical guides like the *Spiritual Exercises* which outlined the path a reader must undertake to reach perfection. This was not new in Catholic literature overall but Teresa's use of spatial metaphors and insistence on reading books were essential to her style of spirituality. *The Interior Castle* transformed abstract theology into something tangible in the contemplative's mind. Although the castle was made of crystal, the walls, floors, ceilings and doors took the mystical journey away from a heavenly chimerical realm and placed it firmly in the corporeal body. This is further highlighted by the use of books in aiding this contemplation, again connecting the abstract to the material. This reflects a shift in the early modern period that will become more evident in the next two chapters towards a communal and physical experience of the divine. Through learned and repeated emotional practices, found in Teresa's guidebooks, religious emotions became embodied and accessible to the practitioner, as well as something that had to be learned and practiced rather than through spontaneous visitations by God.

iii. Seventeenth-Century English Carmelite Spirituality

In this section I will analyse the writing of two seventeenth-century nuns, Catherine Darcy and Catherine Smith, to explore how Ignatian and Teresian spiritualties influenced their methods and understanding of the practice of prayer. This includes explicit practice of the *Spiritual Exercises,* meditating on stations of the Cross as well as other elements of their spirituality. Further, there is a focus on material objects to aid contemplation, although this will be discussed more in the next chapter. These practices ultimately led to and shaped their mystical visions while building familial bonds with their confessors and Carmelite sisters.

In the Antwerp annals, no sister documented her spiritual methods in more detail, and exemplified the blending of Teresian and Ignatian methodology, than Catherine Darcy. Born in Northamptonshire in 1610 to recusant parents Henry Darcy Esq. and Frances Monninges, Darcy made her profession in Antwerp aged thirty in 1640. Described in the annals as dedicated to piety and devotion from a young age, years of "accidents" delayed her profession and although she enjoyed the entertainments of the world until then, she always made "fervent acts of the love of God."[111] Catherine Darcy's mystical experiences will be included in more depth throughout further chapters, but for now I will focus on the extensive notes she made of her meditations. Titled "Her reflections upon the Meditations of an 8 days Exercise, Jesus Maria May the 19 1651", Catherine Darcy listed each meditation undertaken during eight days of spiritual exercises. These meditations included contemplations of "foundation," "religious vocation," "of death," "fruits of penance" and so on, totalling twenty-three meditations in all.[112] The details that Catherine Darcy provided for each meditation consisted of "lights," either a mystical experience or intellectual insight into areas of spirituality. For example, of the latter, she wrote, "I saw that a Religious State is a continuall Cross wherein is eternall happiness."[113] She stated that she had felt great confusion over how little she had regarded this aspect, that is, of the nature of religious vocation, therefore endeavouring to focus more energy towards her vocation.

In one meditation on the "Kingdome of Christ", Catherine Darcy experienced "lights" which invoked Teresian emotional practices, writing:

[111] "Short Colections," 156-7.

[112] "Short Colections," 167-73.

[113] "Short Colections," 167.

> Had many lights of sundry faults which I should make a long Confission to recount. Great courage and strong resolutions to fight valorously in company of our Dear Lord to vanquish his enimyes and mine and not to stick to any difficulty which I conceive may be to his greater glory, but when occassion happens I will immagin I help him to carry his Cross and strive to take the heavy burthen from his sacred shoulders.[114]

For Catherine Darcy, the meditation was rather practical, through her contemplation of the Kingdom of God, or rather God's kingship over humanity, she uncovered faults in her spirituality which she could now confess. She also gained emotional potency, being instilled with the courage and strength she now understood was needed for her spiritual journey. Both aspects were drawn together into Christ's Passion, how she should carry his cross to become closer with him.

In other meditations, Darcy described how these experiences fuelled different emotions including, fear, sorrow, love, and reverence. Throughout each meditation, she gained spiritual insight, experienced visionary events and felt strong, changing emotions. These meditative exercises therefore affected Catherine Darcy on multiple levels. Both methods required the practitioner to gain intellectual and emotional experience. To progress through the exercises or the mansions of the castle, the practitioner had to discern, understand, and correct spiritual faults. Only through understanding the nature of Christ and the words of the Bible could this be done. However, to truly experience divine union, Christ's suffering must be felt, intimately and lovingly. Through Catherine Darcy's documentation and a specified timeline of eight days, her exercises were overtly influenced by Ignatian methods. At the same time, her focus on the interior, on mental prayer, and the topics on which she chose to meditate, such as "Prayer in

[114] "Short Colections," 169.

the Garden," were rooted in Teresian processes.[115] Considering the nature of both methods, it is possible that Catherine Darcy was using the *Exercises* as a structured way to achieve the spiritual labour needed to proceed through her soul's *Castle.* Teresa mentioned the many demons and enemies one must fight through the mansions, as did Catherine Darcy "in the company" of Christ.

Outside the documentation of Catherine Darcy's meditations, her life writing included notable examples of both spiritual methods in her daily religious practice. Writing with more detail on the preparation she undertook for communion, she stated:

> For Holy Communion I ever doe it in this manner being particularly moved and inspired to it, one time I conceive our dear Lord all wounded and afflicted as at the *Ecce Homo* or flagelation to **enter into my soul** with desire to ease and cure his sacred wounds and that his cruell torments may be **imprinted in my heart** so to free him from them. […] The next time I immagin **my self to enter into his divine heart**, miserably wounded and full of imperfections to be healed and cleansed in that sacred **ocian of divine love** [bolding is mine].[116]

Catherine Darcy's repetition of the act of "entering" the soul or heart mirrored Teresa's *Castle,* to traverse the mansions he or she must "enter" into their own soul. At the same time, through focusing on the wounded, tortured human body of Christ, Catherine Darcy was invoking what both methods saw as the essential element of their spiritualties. Teresa and Ignatius stressed the suffering of Christ as something to be deeply and repeatedly contemplated and brought into the self as the only way to reach spiritual union with Him. Finally, Catherine Darcy described the cleansing of her wounds in God's divine heart, his "ocian of divine love." Teresa, and to a

[115] "Short Colections," 171.

[116] "Short Colections," 160.

lesser extent Ignatius', metaphor of the spring or water of Christ is unmistakable here. God's love was a purifying and life-giving water, but for Catherine Darcy it was only through suffering that she was allowed to enter the depths.

One of Catherine Darcy's final exercise entries documented the fruits of her contemplation on "Death," stating:

> I see the best prepartion [*sic*] for death is to dy to all things created and my self, then as St Paul Saith (I shall dye and my life shall be hidden with Christ in God)[117] which I will labour for.[118]

This conclusion came directly from Teresian and Ignatian spirituality: self-surrender, self-annihilation, death of self. Although spiritual death in Christ was not limited or original to both Teresa and Ignatius, as indicated by St Paul's statement, it was repeatedly stressed through the saints' writings as the innermost castle, the final exercise. Catherine Darcy, too, understood that this was the purpose of her spiritual labour. Her chapter in the Antwerp annals gives substantial insight into the emotional practices of the seventeenth-century Carmelites.

Reading through these passages, it is clear Catherine Darcy traced the route of her spiritual journey through the Passion. This was the mystery that nourished her soul and gave her courage to labour in her religious life. Through the *Exercises* and Teresa's guidance, Catherine Darcy had a practical means to achieve the union, suffering, and love for which she yearned. Furthermore, her writing over three courses of her life showed the continued importance and influence of Teresa, but it was seemingly easier to express herself through the *Exercises* structured guide. Catherine Darcy reflected other Carmelite nuns in this use of both methodologies to better stimulate and explain their spiritual labour.

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[117] Colossians 3:3.

[118] "Short Colections," 177.

Although professing at the end of the seventeenth century, Catherine Smith also wrote extensively on her exercises and more notably on her methods in prayer. She was born in Durham in 1677 to recusant parents Thomas Smith Esq and Catherine Salvin. As a young girl, Catherine Smith was a lay boarder, or pensioner, at the Augustinian convent in Bruges before making her profession in the Antwerp Carmelite convent in July 1695, aged eighteen. Her obituary explained that she had been given a book on St Joseph to whom Catherine Smith had always felt a devotion. In this book, she found that St Teresa of Avila also felt comfort in St Joseph, advising readers to ask him for advice which delighted Catherine Smith, cementing her decision to become a Carmelite.[119]

Included in the Antwerp annals was a letter to her then Jesuit spiritual director, Thomas Hunter, as well as various papers documenting her meditations and explanations of her methods.[120] One explanation of Catherine Smith's methods was titled "How I design to make my Prayer." She began with her preparation for meditation:

> J M J T[121]
>
> First to place my self in the Presence of God, with our Lady and St Joseph on one Side and my Holy Angel and our Blessed Mother on the other the rest of my Patron Saints about me
>
> 2nd I will make my preparatory prayer & then by some Short versicle or prayer adress my self to my Patrons above said in particular I'le take St Joseph for my Master and Director in this Exercise puting my Confidence in him next to our Lord and Blessed Lady frequently casting My self at his feet and knees and when I find my self persued by the Enimy or any temptation I will cast my self into his Blessed Armes which has so Often caryed my Dear Jesus[122]

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[119] "Short Colections," 278-9.

[120] Father Thomas Hunter S.J. (1666-1725).

[121] Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Teresa. An invocation recurring throughout Teresian documents.

[122] "Short Colections," 283-4.

Catherine Smith's introduction to how she prays recalls the methodical writing of the *Exercises*, including her use of "Exercise" as being the practice which she prepares. She explicitly documented the emotional practices that she had learned, adapted and used in her spirituality.[123] In contrast to Catherine Darcy, Catherine Smith found her purpose in St Joseph, seeing him as the beloved father figure who cared for Jesus through his life. Both figures factored into the focus on the life of the human Jesus. As noted above, both Teresa and Ignatius acknowledged Christ's humanity as the catalyst for their spirituality. Catherine Smith showed how different aspects of Jesus' life could be used for individual devotion.

Further into Catherine Smith's methodology she specifically noted her use of the *Exercises* in her spiritual practice, stating:

> In the Spirituall Exercise I found that in all my meditations I was drawn to an Interiour life which according to the light I had then did consist in a total and intire disingagement from Creatures and seek my only Comfort in pleasing and serving God in Spirit and truth a faithfull and constant practice of humility and the presence of God and a great fidelity to prayer[124]

In both Catherine Darcy and Catherine Smith's life writing, the importance of the "interior life" was clearly stated. Although Catherine Smith specifically discussed her use of the *Spiritual Exercises*, this passage was closely reminiscent of Teresa's *Castle*. In the progression of the mansions, the interior life, the person became increasingly disconnected from the world, venturing further away from the sin-filled gardens around the perimeter. As Teresa stressed, the centre was the ultimate experience of self-death. As the soul became closer to spiritual

[123] Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 214.

[124] "Short Colections," 285.

marriage the more it only sought and found comfort in God and humility, leaving behind worldly temptations. Catherine Smith's writing was further evidence of the influence of both methodologies on English Carmelite life.

Like Catherine Darcy, Catherine Smith shared a passage that clearly indicated the purpose of her spiritual journey. Written as a meditation for herself, she described the way she viewed Christ, his parents and life and how contemplating on these served her spiritual needs, stating:

> The Med: the hidden Life of our Lord is a Specious field in which the Soul looses it self in admiration of Gods Incomprehensible judgments and inscrutable ways in concealing the Sanctity & Wisdome of his Son from the world which he came to save and instruct and that his whole implyoment for 18 years was the practis of an Interiour life and the Labourious implyoment of a Carpenter Obedient to his Parents humble and unknown in the world ah how is it mistaken when it can value nothing but great & noisy actions, for my part Lord this your hidden obscure life charmes me more then the most glorious acts, the desire of imitating you in this humble & abject State will make me Still continue to use this Asperation which I have so many years used I had rather choose to be an Abject in the house of God then live in the tabernacles of Sinners [emphasis in original].[125]

Catherine Smith found the nourishment of her soul was in contemplating, not the Passion like Catherine Darcy, but the humility and poverty of Jesus' life as a carpenter. The focus of her methodology was still on the imitation of Christ but instead of his torturous suffering it was through his laborious and humble work. Catherine Smith's soul lost worldly temptation through this "hidden obscure life." This purpose most likely stemmed from the second week

[125] "Short Colections," 288-9. "I had rather … tabernacles of Sinners": Psalm 83:11.

of the *Exercises* where every event and aspect of the life of Jesus was meticulously meditated upon. Her different focus indicates that the nuns' spiritual practices were not monolithic but allowed for giving importance to personal, differing emotional methods in order to achieve union. Through this meditation Catherine Smith indicated her personal guide through the mansions, once again stating the importance of self-death at the end of this journey.

Both Catherine Darcy and Catherine Smith show the united influence of Teresa of Avila and Ignatius of Loyola's spiritual methods. The nuns explicitly explored the *Spiritual Exercises*, describing numerous meditations they undertook and the conclusions, or "lights," that were discerned from those contemplations. Jesuit priests acted as their spiritual directors and held strong friendships with both. The weeks of the retreat were evident through their soul's purification, the following of Jesus' life in humility and poverty, his Passion and resurrection. Although the nuns found a different purpose, Catherine Darcy in the Passion and Catherine Smith in his life as a carpenter, both sought the same end to their spiritual journey. Only through exercises, which guided their spiritual labour and emotional practices, could they shed the temptations of the world and their souls finally "lose" themselves in God. Their conclusions respond to the teachings of Teresa, their Blessed Mother who directly influenced their lives intimately. Although it is not as direct as the undertaking of exercises, both nuns use the language and the message of Teresa's *Castle* in their methods. This shows that they learned and practiced a shared *habitus*. Through the aid of the *Exercises* the nuns could labour and progress through the *Castle's* mansions with the goal, the seventh mansion, of self-death.

iv. Conclusion

This chapter built a contextual frame for the mystical experiences of the seventeenth-century English Carmelite nuns. By focusing on the emotional practices in St Teresa of Avila and St

Ignatius of Loyola's spiritual methods, two crucial influences upon the nuns become more evident in their writing. Teresa was a constantly felt presence in the seventeenth-century house, namely through what they saw as their direct lineage from the saint through Anne Mazanas and Anne Worsley. Further, through mystical events St Teresa had appeared to them, in person, numerous times over the century.[126] Teresian and Ignatian spiritual methods provided the "emotional practices" needed in order to learn and achieve spiritual union. In turn, a *habitus* that was an adapted continuation of medieval affective piety was formed.

This influence is evident through the writings of the Carmelites. The spiritual reflections of Catherine Darcy and Catherine Smith reveal the distinctly seventeenth-century English Carmelite experience of both spiritualties. At the heart of both spiritual methods was a map or guide through a highly individual interior life. Clear references were made to the undertaking of retreats in spiritual exercises. Meditations were documented with the effects on and conclusions of the nun detailed in the language learnt from their teachers, Teresa and Ignatius. Most likely the documents included in the annals were meant as private papers, commissioned by the Jesuit director to better discern the nun's spiritual needs. By analysing both Teresa and Ignatius' lives and writings here, the continued influence of affective piety is unmistakable. Their spiritualities combined in the practice of seventeenth-century Carmelite nuns formed the groundwork for a particularly emotional spirituality that made mystical union its goal. In the next chapters the profound influence they had over the spiritual journeys of these and other seventeenth-century English Carmelites will become more apparent. The unwavering belief in the humanity of Christ and the salvation his human life and death gave was at the centre of these spiritual methodologies. Only through personal suffering, humility, poverty and self-death can union with God be achieved.

[126] These events will be discussed in further chapters.

Chapter Three

The Library: Navigating Emotion Through Reading

> In this time of her being at Hooghtreat, as she was one day Sitting alone, and as it were overwhelmd with darkness and dejection of mind, she found her self suddenly transported into the Liberary of Antwerp with her hand upon a book, which she took up and read, the tittle of which was the Love of our Lord Jesus Christ to his beloved Spouses of Antwerp, and in Confidence of her being one of these Spouses, all her disolations vanashed.[1]

The convent library was more than the repository of theological treatises and spiritual guidebooks; it held the tools for navigating and cultivating desired emotions. In times of spiritual, emotional, and physical distress, the nuns would return to the books. Whether this was advised by the Confessor or Spiritual Director, or by personal choice, the library supplemented nuns' prayer and recollection as an integral part of the convent's "emotional regime." A concept posited by William Reddy, is that regimes uphold the dominant community's emotional norms. He argues that those who struggle under the regime feel "emotional suffering." In the Carmelite convent, nuns actively sought to conform to the Catholic Church's regime, but as I will discuss, it was not always simple. Sent to found a convent in Hoogstraten, located roughly forty kilometres from Antwerp, Catherine Wakeman (Teresa of Jesus, d.1698), in a state of "darkness and dejection", was transported back to the Antwerp library. Although the only vision in the Antwerp annals that referred to this location, it hints at a particular woman's spiritual dependence or yearning for the library of the convent. Given the importance of reading in the spiritual journey that St Teresa of Avila had stressed in

[1] "Short Colections," 236.

her *vita* and in the Carmelite constitutions, this yearning is unsurprising. Nevertheless, Catherine Wakeman's vision links the library's spiritual treatises with the transformative power of mystical visions and experiences. The book she envisions reinforces her desire for Christ's love as his spouse and having been reassured through reading, even in a mystical vision, Catherine Wakeman's negative emotions were transformed and "vanashed." Books have a spiritual and emotional resonance, so those contained in the Antwerp library form a critical element of the nuns' mysticism to analyse. In this chapter, I will investigate how the women engaged with guidebooks as tools that offered "emotives" to aid navigation of emotional suffering. This relief from suffering was often facilitated by transformative mystical experiences, including how Catherine Wakeman's desolation was erased by finding herself in the library and reading a book.

The library of Antwerp can only be judged on what exists in the archives at Douai Abbey, which holds a collection of rare books from the Carmelite community in Darlington. This numbers about 100 texts published between the late-sixteenth century and mid-eighteenth century. The majority of the collection is written in English, although there are various texts in French and Latin. Anne Worsley herself wrote one volume in French. All volumes are printed and range in size between folio, duodecimo, and octavo. The varied sizes are most likely due to the nature of English Catholic secret publishing at this time or their intended use, that is whether they are personal books kept in one's pocket or read aloud in recreation. All of the books are bound in leather, mostly calfskin, with brass clasps, while some have limp vellum binding made with goatskin parchment and alum-tawed thongs. A small number of books feature ornate three-dimensional additions that were painted and gilded. Inside there is an array of formatting and decoration, with many volumes featuring prints of etchings depicting scenes of Christ's life and Passion, portraits of spiritual leaders or martyrs, decorative borders, and plumes of fruit or flowers. Douai Abbey's archive includes books from both the Antwerp and

Lierre convents as they were brought back to England in the late eighteenth century and used by the Carmelite community at Darlington and Lanherne.[2] Some of the books indicate which convent they were held in before England, but some might have been gifted to the community once it had returned.

The scholarship on conventual libraries and reading has focused on intellectual culture.[3] Caroline Bowden and Heather Wolfe provide insight into how reading was an essential practice in other religious orders. Bowden's article on the Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre at Liege and the Poor Clares at Rouen argues that reading in post-Tridentine convents was the catalyst for the production of personal writing, generated for the convent community to meet their needs for spiritual guidance.[4] Like the Carmelites, the Sepulchrines followed Ignatian spirituality in addition to their own order's constitutions. Under Ignatian practice, books and reading were essential to the spiritual journey. Bowden emphasises the ever-present nature of books and argues for their significance to nuns' spirituality. Nuns' reading habits were constant, varied, and practical, although not all nuns followed the same practices.

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[2] Both English Carmelite communities, Darlington and Lanherne, have since dissolved. Darlington closed in 2010 due to dwindling numbers and the high cost of maintaining the convent. With the closure of their communities, the nuns gifted Douai Abbey archive with their collections.

[3] Bowden, "A Distribution of Tyme," 99-116; Caroline Bowden, "English Reading Communities in Exile: Introducing Cloistered Nuns to Their Books," in *Women's Bookscapes in Early Modern Britain*, ed. Leah Knight, Micheline White and Elizabeth Sauer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018), 171-192; Jaime Goodrich, "Common Libraries: Book Circulation in English Benedictine Convents, 1600-1700," in *Women's Bookscapes in Early Modern Britain*, ed. Leah Knight, Micheline White and Elizabeth Sauer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018), 153-170; Lay, "The Literary Lives of Nuns," 71-86; Wolfe, "Reading Bells," 135-156.

[4] Bowden, "A Distribution of Tyme," 99.

Wolfe examines the reading habits of the Benedictine nuns of Cambrai and Paris through their tutelage under Augustine Baker. Although Baker's spirituality was at odds with Ignatian, it is useful to see how Baker's instruction influenced the Benedictines considering that the Antwerp Carmelites did have a copy of *Sancta Sophia*, published in 1657. Wolfe used the Benedictine constitutions on reading, as well as Baker's instructions on spiritual reading, to explore what practices the nuns would have undertaken. One important distinction that she makes is the "leap from reading pre-monastically to reading inside the enclosure."[5] These young women "were leaving behind a way of viewing the world, a way of processing information, a way of reading, thinking and writing."[6] Before their vocation, women could read what, when, and where they wanted. Although they might have been pious and already focused on their religious life, their reading in the secular world would always be understood and practiced differently compared to within the convent.[7] Both Wolfe and Bowden show the importance of analysing the reading practices of convents to gain further insight into the nuns' spiritual needs.

Nicky Hallett uses the Antwerp and Lierre Carmelites' life writing to analyse the nuns' reading practices and how these shaped their understanding of the convent and, more specifically, private spaces such as the cell.[8] Her analysis considers the role of books in guiding women's monastic vocation and their significant role in the nuns' professed life. Hallett focuses on the political effect of books in the nuns' experience and description of space. She argues that an experience of the secular domestic connects the women's previous aristocratic lives and extends into the cloister's devotional. Hallett's analysis is important for my argument because

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[5] Wolfe, "Reading Bells," 135.

[6] Wolfe, "Reading Bells," 135.

[7] Wolfe, "Reading Bells," 136-7.

[8] Hallett, "Philip Sidney in the Cloister," 94.

it shows how reading practices, space, and identity formation can be linked and affected by each other. Nonetheless, her article focuses on reading that is a cause for anxiety, books read before religious profession, and excluded within the convent, whereas my focus is on books that aimed to relieve that anxiety.

This chapter will investigate "acceptable" books, spiritual guides and treatises, and how they were read, used, and understood. To do this, I will use the concepts of "emotives" and "emotional regimes" articulated in William Reddy's *Navigation of Feeling*.[9] He describes an emotive as an emotion word that not only attempts to express how a person feels but one that can potentially transform and create emotion. Emotives are essentially analogous to a performative in that they are not merely descriptive but also create action. Stating that one is angry may bring attention to thoughts and emotions that one was not entirely aware of before making the statement. The outcome of emotives is not always what one expects but are generally successful when used purposefully. Therefore, they can be tools to create and achieve emotion, such as through meditation or prayer, or in this example, reading. The repetition of emotion words may induce that emotion within someone. Reddy considers that emotives can

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[9] Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*; Other scholars have since used Reddy's regimes showing how it can be utilized across different time periods and in different fields of research. Denise Z. Davidson builds upon Reddy's historical work, stating that "Reddy views the rejection of sentimentalism is contributing to a more masculine political world. […] However, [Davidson's article] suggests that women's expressions, too, reflected and contributed." By including women in this argument, Davidson deepened the understanding of that particular emotional regime. Denise Z. Davidson, "The New (Emotional) Regime: Bourgeois Reactions to the Turmoil of 1814-1815," *French Historical Studies* 42, no. 4 (2019): 599; Orit Rozin reconstructed the emotional norms of the social elite that governed the recently developed state of Israel in an effort to understand how they molded new immigrants into border Israelis. This study shows how it was possible to composite an emotional regime from multiple governing bodies with shared norms, in "Infiltration and the Making of Israel's Emotional Regime in the State's Early Years," *Middle Eastern Studies* 52, no. 3 (2016): 448-472.

be learned and habitual.[10] Emotions have automaticity when they become a "deeply ingrained, overlearned habit."[11] The concept of emotives as learned habits, or practices, is evidenced when they become part of an emotional repertoire within Reddy's concepts of the regime, and refuge.

Reddy uses the terms "emotional regime," "emotional refuge," and "emotional suffering" to explore how emotions were agents of social change. A regime is a group within society that controls and enforces a set of acceptable emotional norms or emotives. Considering that emotives can be learned and habitual, the regime, therefore, controls what people learn and express. As the terminology infers, regimes are always in a position of power. Naturally, human beings are not so easily controlled, and a regime's accepted emotives may not align with individual emotional understanding or beliefs. Reddy explains the consequence of this as "emotional suffering." If a person is forced to perform emotives that do not align with their own life and emotional experience, then suffering occurs.[12] Often these feelings are shared by others under the regime, which leads to the formation of an oppositional "emotional refuge" for people to practice emotions that suit them better. The emotional regime in this chapter is not a monolith. The Catholic Church constituted spheres of influence that changed and merged over time. Barbara Rosenwein argued that "the notion of an emotional regime closely tracks that of an emotional community – as long as that community dominates the norms and texts of a large part of society."[13] It would be easy to say the Church was the dominant community, but it was made up of highly diverse people, regions, texts, orders, rules, histories, and

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[10] William H. Reddy, "Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions," *Current Anthropology* 38, no. 3 (1997): 327-351; Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*, 105.

[11] Alice Isen and Gregory Andrade Diamond, "Affect and Automaticity," in *Unintended Thought,* ed. James S. Uleman and John A. Bargh (New York: The Guilford Press, 1989), 144.

[12] Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 47-53.

[13] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 22.

reactionaries. Convents were founded with a particular affiliation in mind. Many of the Carmelites at Antwerp had been trained in Jesuit spirituality during their childhood, which, as I discussed in Chapter One, created discord with the Carmelite friars. Despite all the Teresian houses being allied with the Society of Jesus, other "emotional communities" held influence within the convent.

With this in mind, I argue that the convent library was a space that held and enforced the Antwerp community's regime and its accepted emotional norms. The nuns wanted to fit within and thrive in the emotional regime that dominated their community. The nuns consistently read spiritual guidebooks and treatises as both a religious practice and an emotional one. Catherine Wakeman experienced emotional suffering because she believed her feelings of homesickness were incongruous with her duty to the Church. In her transformative vision, she turned to a book – a tool of the regime that gave nuns the right emotives to navigate this suffering. The library is a source of emotional relief. Unlike Reddy's "refuges," nuns did not seek subversion of the regime but still experienced confusion and emotional discord. Emotional confusion was usually described as "aridity" or the wandering of the mind. Frances Turner (Francisca Teresa of the Passion, d.1693) explained it as "omitting and neglecting the meanes particularly prayer and Spirituall reading whereby I have wanted a staidiness of heart and been easyly transported by exteriour things and carryd away by inconstancy and infidelity."[14] Books, under the regime's structure, were a tool for the nuns to cultivate their emotions and return to the desired state. Reading was not just a spiritual or theological exercise; reading had an emotional, transformative power. Instead of breaking away from the Church in a subversive manner, it brought nuns back to an emotional state they desired and was accepted by their religious community.

[14] "Short Colections," 215.

In this chapter, the library, and the books contained within, will be analysed through this lens of the emotional regime. First, the reading habits of the Carmelite nuns will be explored. The nuns' own accounts of their secular and monastic reading in the annals will be analysed. The section will show the importance of reading to the nuns as a narrative tool which legitimise their choice of vocation and gives greater insight into nuns' emotional and spiritual lives through reading. Second, particular books from the collection at Douai Abbey will be analysed for emotional description and instruction, namely through Rosenwein's basic instructions on collecting and understanding historical emotions.[15] Emotives, or emotion words, and overall emotional themes will be identified. The books will give an insight into what the convent's emotional regime was and how different authors suggested it be followed in order to gain religious perfection. Finally, the third section will return to the writing of the nuns in the Antwerp annals to show how they engaged this reading material focusing on their interaction with spiritual exercises from guidebooks and how the literature was generally reflected in their life experiences.

i. Reading Habits

> Afterwards she could never putt the thought out of her mind of being Religious, and one day as in a great Conflict what she should doe, she opened her Thomas a Kempis, she resolved to take the advice it should give her, and the first words she cast her Eyes upon were these, 'why fearest thou to take up a Cross that leads to a Kingdome,' upon which she took the first oppertunity of making this Sacrifice of herself to God whom she believed had made use of these means, for

[15] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 23-4.

> her great happiness often repeating these passages with much consolation and gratitude to Allmighty God for her religious vocation.[16]

In the biography of Catherine Wakeman, spiritual reading was the guide to her vocation. Although multiple nuns in the Antwerp annals also described specific visions and life experiences as children which led them to their religious vocation, books and acts of reading often accompanied these in solidifying their calling. St Teresa of Avila experienced this, explaining in her *Vita* that through reading she was enlightened to take the monastic path.[17] Catherine Wakeman's experience indicated a strong relationship with religious texts in her recusant upbringing. She, or her family, owned a copy of Thomas à Kempis (c.1380 – 1471), which she had read and turned to in times of "conflict." Here we see the transformative power of reading, not just guiding her to a vocational decision, but also in terms of providing the correct emotives to cultivate her emotional connection to the community. Catherine Wakeman's inner conflict was transformed into happiness through this act. The reference to taking up the cross was transformative, "why fearest thou to take up a Cross." Catherine Wakeman's conflict had been fear – of becoming a religious, and of leaving her family and her homeland. Through the words of Kempis, she found courage. Analysing the reading habits of nuns and their books through an emotional lens provides a significant insight into the spiritual understanding and experience of early modern nuns.

In the Antwerp annals, the Carmelite nuns routinely described their reading habits before taking the veil more so than during their religious profession. Often this mention of pre-convent reading served their narrative of religious calling, showing how they were miraculously led to St Teresa, or at the very least, to demonstrate the piety of their childhood.

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[16] "Short Colections," 235.

[17] Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*, 29.

Teresa Wakeman's (Teresa of the Holy Ghost, d.1702) obituary described her long illness, saying she spent most of her professed life in the infirmary. On the morning she died, she "desired one of the Infirmarians to read her a point out of Thomas a Kempis who opening the Book Severall times allways litte upon the Chapter of judgment."[18] Both times, Kempis's book is shown to have mystical power, its mysterious nature of opening to the right pages in prophecy. The first prophecy indicated the beginning of religious life, and the second the end of one; Teresa Wakeman passed away in her cell later that day. These two examples accentuate the spiritual authority of books.

At the beginning of Teresa Wakeman's life, another source, St Francis of Sales (1567-1622), also guided her to a religious vocation. Although she was always pious in her younger life, she was afraid at the thought of being a nun. She avoided religious discourse and reading, "but speaking accedently of St Frances Sales Book Intituled the love of God she found a desire of reading it, but first asked if there was any thing in it that treated of Religious, it was told her no upon which she read it and before she had finished it Allmighty God so powerfully touchd her heart […] she resolved to become a lover and Spouse of Jesus Christ."[19] While Kempis's book appears twice as a catalyst of change, transforming fear into determination, Sales' influence was far more potent, with his text corporeally linking God and this future nun directly with his touch upon her heart.

Both Kempis and Sales were influential amongst Catholics and Protestants alike. Kempis's *The Imitation of Christ* was a cornerstone for the *devotio moderna*, which stressed meditation and internal devotion. Kempis's own life could be summed up by the Latin inscribed on a contemporary portrait of him stating that he "sought rest and found it nowhere,

[18] "Short Colections," 242.

[19] "Short Colections," 242.

save in little nooks with little books."[20] In comparison, Sales' works were new and fresh, *Traité de l'amour de Dieu* (Treatise on the Love of God) was first published in 1616, reflecting the writing and the religious issues of the post-Reformation period. Daniel Stramara has argued that Sales writing "beautifully portrayed the feminine side of God in ways to which the average person could relate and understand."[21] Sales' theology was grounded in *imago Dei* (image of God – symbolically relating God and humanity) and the heart of God, a spirituality that was embodied and reflected the popularity of affective piety since Kempis's work.[22] Despite Teresa Wakeman's fear and avoidance of religious discourse, Sales provided a contemporary affective channel to God that convinced her of her true vocation as a nun.[23]

Books and the acts of reading led to a religious conviction in numerous other examples. In the Antwerp annals, nuns usually mentioned the books they read that influenced them to choose the monastic life. Unsurprisingly, the most common was the life of St Teresa of Avila.[24] Mary Birbeck's decision to become a nun was described thus:

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[20] R. Jay Magill, Jr., "Turn Away the World: How a Curious Fifteenth-Century Spiritual Guidebook Shaped the Contours of the Reformation and Taught Readers to Turn Inward," *Christianity & Literature* 67, no. 1 (2017): 39.

[21] Daniel Stramara, "St Francis de Sales and the Maternal Love of God," *Atchison* 21, no. 2 (2015): 3.

[22] Stramara, "St Francis de Sales," 3.

[23] Francis de Sales was also particularly popular amongst seventeenth-century English Christians, Catholic and Protestants, as shown by Mary Hardy, "The Seventeenth-Century English and Scottish Reception of Francis de Sales' An Introduction to a Devout Life," *British Catholic History* 33, no. 2 (2016): 228-258.

[24] Nuns mentioning reading St Teresa of Avila's life writing include Helen Wigmore (Helen of the Holy Cross, 1599-1672), "Short Colections," 121; Katherine Bedingfield (Lucy of Ignatius, 1614-165), "Short Colections," 138; Frances Turner (Francisca Teresa of the Passion, d.1693), "Short Colections," 209.

> Being allways a great lover of reading […] [she] was once in ye chamber of a priest, tumbling over his little liberary and he, perceiving it, chid her for disordering his books, but bid her chuse any one and he would lend it her most willingly. Upon which she was put to a stand, and viewing them all she fix'd upon one that was placed very high wch had a guilt back, without knowing what it was. The priest told her she had made an excellent choice, for it was the life of the great St Teresa, upon which they had some discourse […] She read it several times over and every time was more and more delighted with it till at last she was so effectually confirmed in ye thoughts […] and inspired with a desire of being of her Holy Order.[25]

Mary Birbeck's narrative notes that she chose the book at random, highlighting the preordained nature of her choosing the Carmelite order. Their founder and saint had chosen and persuaded Mary Birbeck through reading her biography.

This idea of "destiny" through reading was also found in Catherine Smith's biography:

> She was a Pentioner at the English Augustines at [Bruges] and accidentily came to know of our Order and house by the Dead Bill of Sister Clare [of the Annunciation Darcy] who a little before her death had fortold the coming of a Novice whos name was Cathrine, about the same time one of the Religious there gave her a little Book of our Holy Father St Joseph to whom she allways had a Singular devotion and by this meanes increased. here she found our Holy Mother St Teresa had very much advanced the honour of this glorious Saint […] thus allso became much devouted to our Holy mother, and informing her self more particularly of her Holy Order was so moved with it that she perferrd it to where she was and to all others.[26]

[25] *Antwerp Annals Volume II*, Douai Abbey CA1, 2-3.

[26] "Short Colections," 279.

Although Catherine Smith did not directly read the life of St Teresa here, her story echoed Mary Birbeck's chance encounters in reading that led to the Carmelite order. Catherine Darcy had professed in 1640 at the age of thirty. Her entry in the Antwerp annals shows a prolific spiritual writer who shared her constant struggles and "lights" during private meditation. After her death in 1694, the Carmelites circulated her "dead bill," or obituary, the document highlighted her spiritual journey and advertised the convent's spiritual richness. Catherine Smith's obituary states that she had read Catherine Darcy's dead bill, which ultimately moved her to join the Carmelites at Antwerp, professing in 1695. Her profession was important because Catherine Darcy had prophesised Catherine Smith's future vocation in the Carmelite order. Further, Catherine Smith's devotion to St Joseph mirrored that of St Teresa of Avila and solidified her decision to join the Carmelites.[27]

Not only were books the tools of God in fashioning the nuns' calling, but these chance encounters also describe emotional importance. Mary Birbeck was delighted and filled with religious desire, and Catherine Smith was "so moved." The latter description is undefined but indicates a passionate resolve towards the Carmelites and holy orders. These examples mirror those of the nuns who read Kempis and Sales; through the women's reading of text, their spirituality became more emotionally connected to God. These spiritual books provided emotives based on the positive emotional qualities of religious life, which the Catholic regime promoted. Further, these emotives were instilled in lay women long before they professed.[28] They were affected by the emotive connections highlighted in books and thus emotionally transformed their conviction to become nuns.

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[27] Hallett briefly discusses this particular miraculous link in *Lives of Spirit*, 83-4.

[28] Lux-Sterritt also looks at individual emotion words, or emotives, in her chapter on how nuns sought to suppress and tame emotions, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 136-59.

Other notable religious persons were catalysts for Carmelite spiritual lives, including medieval mystics. Mary White wrote that "once being desired to read the life of St Catherine of Siena, in which time God gave [her] a great desire of being Religious."[29] Other nuns simply mentioned their love of spiritual books; Anne Levesson "deprived [her] self of many recreations and pleasures which other of [her] age and condition used, and [her] chiefest delight was in reading Spirituall books and busing my thoughts in Celestiall things."[30] These references to reading all share common features: the feelings of delight and desire. The nuns were addicted to spiritual books and reading. As children, they raided their confessors' libraries and re-read books over several times, while other children played. They connected to the material on a different level, to other people, which inevitably led them to monastic vows. Reading was essential to their personal religious history and narrative. Nuns' connections to books were a way to build their reputations as holy women and legitimise their entering the convent to themselves and, for many, to their families and superiors.

So far, the majority of examples have been of the nuns' secular lives, and how reading spiritual books led them to religious life. Mentions of specific reading episodes during their life in the convent are rarer within the annals, but as Bowden and Wolfe have explained, reading was a daily exercise the nuns were expected to do.[31] The examples of secular reading and the authoritative nature of books as a guide to a religious life also give weight to the prevalence of and need for reading in the monastic enclosure. Therefore, it is safe to assume, despite a lack of specific evidence, nuns read spiritual books and felt reading was of profound importance on their journey to perfection. Margaret Andrew's (Margaret of St Ignatius, d.1716)

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[29] "Short Colections," 102.

[30] "Short Colections," 112. Another example of spiritual reading as children include Ann Harcot (Anne of St Mary, 1624-1678) who read the lives of saints, "Short Colections," 18.

[31] Bowden, "A Distribution of Tyme": 99-116; Wolfe, "Reading Bells," 135-56.

obituary focused on her love of prayer and reading, stating, "She seemd from her tender Age to have Suckd in the piety of her Ancesstors and was allways given very much to prayer and reading, by which meanes she obtaind great lights."[32] Similarly, Mary Gifford's (Mary of the Holy Martyrs, 1639-1713) biographer wrote that "she was most remarkable for Solitude Silence recolection and fidility to prayer and Spirituall reading in which she spent most of her time when old and Infirm."[33] Reading spiritual books was a direct source for mystical experience and religious perfection for the narrators of these obituaries. In the Antwerp convent, they read through to old age and during illness, as an essential part of their practice. Nuns regularly read and, under the direction of their confessors, wrote their responses and spiritual experiences based on this reading.[34]

Reading was an enforced daily activity in the road to religious perfection, but it was a practice of high emotional power and importance for the Carmelites. From picking up books to reveal their fates or growing up reading saints' lives, nuns described their early interaction with books as a starting point in their journey and a key component to legitimising their piety

[32] "Short Colections," 236.

[33] "Short Colections," 269.

[34] There has not been enough information about the actual practice of spiritual and devotional writing within the annals to commit a section or chapter to it. Life writing is, of course, essential but there are almost no mentions of writing beyond this. Although the library contains a copy of a book written by Anne Worsley, she does not mention writing it within her autobiography. Conversely, the Lierre annals makes a note in Mary Vaughen's (Mary of St Joseph, d.1709) biography that she wrote a book but there does not seem to be an existing copy. All that is mentioned of her book is relegated to a footnote, indicated here by an asterisk, "Her love of holy poverty also was remarkable. They stated that in the course of the of the 59 years she lived in Religion she consumed no more than the quantity of one candle in going to bed, but [when she did] work [she] did so in the dark. *In odd moments she wrote a book of private devotion, and in the 7 years she was doing this she used only one and the same pen." in *Lierre Annals Book I*, Douai Abbey CA1, 5.

and experiences. These experiences also indicate the prevalence before their vocation of the emotional regime they would seek to conform to throughout their lives.[35] The books themselves were ultimately controlled in theme and message by the Church. Books were, therefore, tools of the emotional regime to which the nuns had to conform. Spiritual books worked within the structure of the regime and served as a way for suffering nuns to mediate their emotions and return to the emotional norms they sought after. The books of the library must also be analysed to consider the importance of reading to both nuns' spiritual practice and emotional well-being. By going through the emotional content of the nuns' books, the norms and emotives of the regime can be uncovered.

ii. The Books

When Catherine Wakeman envisioned herself transported back to Antwerp's library, she looked upon a specifically titled book, "*Love of our Lord Jesus Christ to his beloved Spouses of Antwerp.*"[36] The vision is not about the space of the library but the importance of its contents, the books. Catherine Wakeman's vision represents a mystical dependence on spiritual reading for support and guidance. The book's materiality was what drew her to the library, having found herself there "with her hand upon a book." It is entirely interior within the mind, found in a vision, but the spiritual connection is made through real material items. The line between the interior and exterior is blurred in Catherine Wakeman's vision. In this section, I will examine the books from the library more closely to find the emotion words the authors used that, through reading, became the emotives used to cultivate the Church's emotional regime.

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[35] Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 47-53.

[36] I have found no evidence that this book exists but there may be an unpublished manuscript either lost or currently inaccessible. "Short Colections," 236.

The majority of the library contains books with spiritual exercises written by Jesuit priests, featuring varying themes and lengths of retreats. Books of meditations, prayers, and hymns follow closely in number with the odd life of a martyr, mystic, or saint included.[37] Thematically, the majority focus on the Passion of Christ, relationships with Christ and the Virgin Mary. Catherine Wakeman's book, *Love of our Lord Jesus Christ to his beloved Spouses of Antwerp,* is not held in the collection at Douai Abbey, but a similar book remains. *An epistle or exhortation of Jesus Christ to the soule*, echoes the book that assured Catherine Wakeman in her vision of the Antwerp library. The English translation was published secretly in England in 1592; the volume is simply bound in soft goat leather, and small enough to fit comfortably in the hand. It begins:

> O my dearely belooved Daughter, I have spoken to thy heart by secrete inspirations, but thou wouldest never give eare unto my motions, wherefore since thou diddest care little to answer me, much less to obey me, I am enforced by the great love I beare thee, to write unto thee, that at the least thou mayest be content to reade what thou didest neglect to heare, and by reading both better beare away my exhortation, and more deepely imprint it in thy minde.[38]

One of the oldest books in the collection, with an inscription, annotation, and purportedly written in the first person by Christ, the *Exhortation of Jesus Christ* presents an interesting case study for this section. The primary emotion words it contains, and the format

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[37] These odd books will not be explored too deeply in this chapter but include: Teresa, *The Flaming Hart*; St. Bridget, *The Most Devout Prayers of St Brigitte, Touching the most Holy Passion of Our Saviour Jesus Christ* (Antwerp, 1686); John Geninges, *The Life and Death of Mr. Edmund Geninges priest, Crowned with Martyrdome at London, the 10. day of Nouember, in the yeare M.D.XCI* (St Omers, 1614).

[38] Johann Justus Lanspergius, *An Epistle or Exhortation of Jesus Christ to the Soule, that is Deuoutly affected towarde Him*, trans. Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel (1592), 1. Douai Abbey BB1.

of practical guidance underpinned with emotional management are not unique to the collection. The passage teaches the reader that only part of Christ's message is heard, for example, during Mass, and to "more deepely imprint it in thy minde" the reader must conduct spiritual reading. He explains how the reader can better shape their practice to perfection. The exhortation is aimed at the reader whose mind wanders or cannot focus on Christ alone. Often the "author" begs the reader, "I stand desiring thee, and waiting for thee, I wishe that thou wouldest returne unto me with al thy hart, and forsaking all these vanities, apply thy selfe wholy to devotion. […] I require no multitude of works at thy hands, where with to trouble thee, but a chaste, faithfull and pure hart."[39] This pure heart can be obtained through "sincere love, and a fervent devotion," with a "pure intention in performing of al those things that I commaunde."[40] Through this language, to use Reddy's terms, the book is an explicit tool of the Church's spiritual and emotional regime.[41] If we take Catholic literature as a tool to be used by the spiritually suffering person as a way to bring themselves back to the emotional regime, this exhortation is a perfect example.

The Passion is described through Christ's own words, "I was unloosed from the Piller, where being bound, I was whipped and wounded for thy sake, and this I do, that I may make an impression of my selfe in thy minde, wounded as I was, and that thou imbracing me with the armes of thy love, I may unite thee unto me, and inflame thee with my woundes."[42] The language is emotional, invoking compassion for his suffering and familiar physical love. The

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[39] The underlined section having been made by a reader, a wobbly line now in soft faded ink. It cannot be determined who marked the book but underlining from the same ink exists throughout. Lanspergius, *An Epistle or Exhortation of Jesus Christ*, 3.

[40] Lanspergius, *An Epistle or Exhortation of Jesus Christ*, 3.

[41] Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 47-53.

[42] Underlining again by our reader. Lanspergius, *An Epistle or Exhortation of Jesus Christ*, 4.

reader is transported to the scene of his Passion and is implored to embrace his broken body in order to unite with him. The book continues this emotional language, the emotives, of the regime, as "love," "desire," "fervent devotion," "embrace," "inflame," "suffer"; it does this not just through the direct speech of an exhortation but also instructs in practical ways to connect to the material with hymns, exercises, and prayers. The repetition of these emotives through multiple methods teaches the practitioner how they are meant to feel until they do feel that way. These were essential words because, being imbued by long-held religious meaning, they were accessible emotions that gave the nuns spiritual agency. Love, desire, and suffering could be both sincerely felt and easily performed. Within the regime, books shaped the accepted meanings of words and instructed on how they could be emotionally performed satisfactorily.[43] When Catherine Wakeman envisioned a book like this one, she was "overwhelmd with darkness and dejection of mind."[44] By reading the direct word of Christ to his spouses, her emotions were transformed because she was given the correct tools for performing and feeling them authentically. She was reminded of Christ's sacrifice for her and the focus she needed to give this love in order to unite with him in perfection.

The book, *Exhortation of Jesus Christ,* stressed this personal one-on-one relationship, to the extent that it convinces the reader to make themselves alone in the world.[45] On the flyleaf

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[43] Jacqueline Van Gent has shown how the Moravians used an emotional regime and the words it gave importance to as a tool for conversion which simultaneously gave African slaves spiritual agency in "Rethinking Savagery: Slavery Experiences and the Role of Emotions in Oldendorp's Mission Ethnography," *History of the Human Sciences* 32, vol. 4 (2019): 28-42; Also see Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 47-53; Further, although in the medieval context, McNamer, *Affective Meditation*; Rebecca F. McNamara, "The Emotional Body in Religious Belief and Practice," in *Emotions in Europe, 1100-1700: Conversations Across Methodologies, 1*, ed. Susan Broomhall and Andrew Lynch (London: Routledge: 2019), 105-116.

[44] "Short Colections," 236.

[45] An opinion also held by the Church and St Teresa. Lanspergius, *An Epistle or Exhortation of Jesus Christ*, 15.

of the book an inscription, written in an early modern hand, reads "To Sister Elizabeth of the Assumtion / From her Loving cossen Sister Francis Felton."[46] Exchanges of books and spiritual ideas remained a constant amongst the recusants and exiles. Although the aim was internal unification with Christ, books were shared amongst friends and family, read aloud in recreation, spiritual directors guided exercises contained within them, and meaning was found with confidants and confessors. These external forces worked within the emotional regime to manage and focus on feeling. As stated in *Exhortation of Jesus Christ*, "let thy minde therefore be ever occupyed in holie desires, that no moment may passe wherein thou doost not wounde me, seeke to pearce my hart, with the fierie dartes of thy inflamed desires."[47]

Exploring the rest of the library, the primary emotion words that appear are "love" and "happiness," both of which are paired with "suffering."[48] To find that love is the most frequently described emotion in spiritual literature is unsurprising. Divine love, as realised through the Passion, is the focus of Christianity. Love, as a "primary" emotion word, encompasses broader ideas such as compassion, comfort, and expressions of familiarity or intimacy. In *Conversing with God*, the deity is described as being ever-present. It states that "all times are proper to make Holy Love to him," further describing the intimacy of this love when "in the Night, [God] remains by your Pillow, to entertain you in the silence of the Night by his secret Inspirations, and to help you to make a Holy and Sweet repose admist the

[46] No "Elizabeth of the Assumption" exists at the English Carmelite convents, although there is an Elizabeth of the Visitation Emery and Eugenia of Jesus, whose secular name was Elizabeth Leveson. Frances Felton (professed 1593) was a nun at St Ursula's in Louvain. Somehow the book made its way into the Antwerp collection, perhaps through a pensioner in Louvain, by correspondence or just someone passing through. WWTN, https://wwtn.history.qmul.ac.uk/.

[47] Lanspergius, *An epistle or exhortation of Jesus Christ*, 101.

[48] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 139-30.

Sweetnesses and Celestial Pleasures of his Interior Conversation."[49] The author is convincing the reader to have confidence in God's all-encompassing love. He does this by describing tender moments of connection in times of silence and loneliness, for example, at night. For the nun reading this in her cell during private moments, the text's emotionality must have been reassuring. God is said to "extinguish your Fears; […] dissipate your Doubts and Apprehensions."[50] God's love transforms emotions. It finishes by stating:

> It is much, that he hears you: But when you speak to him with this respectful confidence, he cannot forbear answering, and comforting you: He does it not by forming words in the Air, but by applying his Lights, his Thoughts and his Sweetnesses to your Heart. 'Tis his Heart which speaks to his Spouse's, and 'tis a Language, they understand.[51]

The communication of God's love is entirely through reciprocal emotional routes, through "lights," used by the Carmelite nuns to indicate mystical experiences, and the heart, thought to be the source of feeling and spirituality.[52] Noteworthy too are the specific words used, comfort and sweetness, with this text in particular advocating for a more intimate knowledge of God without referring to his suffering on the Cross.

Conversing with God argued the importance of confidence in speaking to God, it does not go into practicalities. Other books in the library specifically focus on and include meditations, exercises, hymns, and prayers to be learned and practiced. During spiritual

[49] Michel Boutauld, *A Method of Conversing with God*, trans. John Warner of the Society of Jesus (London, 1692), Douai Abbey BB1, 14-5.

[50] Boutauld, *A Method of Conversing with God*, 134.

[51] Boutauld, *A Method of Conversing with God*, 135.

[52] Evident in the late-medieval cult of the Sacred Heart and discussed further in Heather Webb, *The Medieval Heart* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

exercises, it was the spiritual director who read aloud from a book to the retreatant, and there are multiple examples of this kind of book in the library. Conversely, small books containing meditations appear more personal and read directly by the nun. The *Meditations of the Whole Historie of the Passion of Christ* begins with a long preface arguing its case for the importance of meditation before outlining specific meditations on every aspect of the Passion. The author suggests that:

> The vertuous sort, and such as Serve Almighty God rather for love than feare, are wholy set on fire with the love of their Redeemer through remembrance and mediation of his Death and Passion. […] As for Heaven, Hell and the last Judgment, because they are not subject to our sight, and seeme to be afarre off, we doe not sufficiently conceive or apprehend the same: but for the afflictions of the body and the anguishes of the minde, we understand often times by experience more than wee would.[53]

For the author, the best method of meditation for the pious, not out of fear of punishment, is through the Passion of Christ. His bodily suffering was something tangible, understandable to humanity, and in that way, the best way to be "set on fire with love."

Overall, the book focused on a method of affective connection through meditation, with purely emotional responses to the Passion being the path to perfection. These emotions included compassion, admiration, hope, and compunction, meaning sorrow for your sins. He concludes to his readers to "make your bodyes fit Sepulchers for the body of our Lord; & with your mindes render unto him praise, and thankesgivings: and to be short, being inflamed with

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[53] Francois Coster, *I.H.S Meditations of the Whole Historie of the Passion of Christ*, trans. Laurence Worthington (Douai, 1616) Douai Abbey BB1, pages 4-5 of the Preface, unnumbered.

the love of him."[54] Once again the line between exterior and interior is blurred, the *Exhortation* doing so between object of the book and its message, and *Historie of the Passion* through textual importance of the relationship between body and mind. *Conversing with God* also explores the exterior and interior through the imagery of God's presence in the physical world, by the pillow at night and communicating through the body, namely the heart. In all of these texts, Christ's love encompasses object, body, and mind. Only through attention to all of these avenues is it possible to gain union and perfection and experience the fire of his love. Ultimately, the books of the library connect these avenues through meditation, recollection, and prayer centred on Christ's Passion. Early modern Catholic literature was, therefore, an extension of the popular late-medieval affective piety.[55]

Through affective piety the suffering and death of Christ, and of the devout practitioner, is paradoxically linked to the happiness of salvation and love.[56] The literature of the seventeenth century shows the continued practice of this piety. *The Exercise of the Love of God Crucified for Us*, subtitled "OR The True Way to Happinesse", is another spiritual manual focused on the Passion of Christ held by the Carmelites, and it was dedicated to the Benedictine Abbess Mary Vavasour (Marie, Abbess between 1652-1676) in Brussels. Physically the book closely resembles the others mentioned in this chapter, one easily carried in a pocket or held in the palm comfortably. The author first explains the advantages of this exercise, explaining the

[54] Coster, *Whole Historie of the Passion of Christ*, last page of unnumbered Preface.

[55] Other scholars have made the same connection including Warren who traced links across medieval and early modern religious women in *The Embodied Word*.

[56] Shoemaker, "Mary at the Cross, East and West," 570-606; Bynum, *Jesus As Mother*; Bestul, *Texts of Passion*; Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation*; Amsler, "Affective Literacy," 83-110.

spiritual goodness that comes from it and the "pleasantness" that comes from practicing it.[57] This goodness is a crucial focus for any Jesuit spiritual guidebook. A. Paulin-Campbell has shown that after performing the exercises, there was a reported shift towards a more positively experienced self.[58]

The imaginative contemplation outlined in Jesuit exercises gave retreatants a new sense of freedom within the oppressive aspects, or emotional regimes, of their cultures. The book then outlined each stage of the retreat, which I explained as functioning like a tool for emotional practices in chapter two. Through an adaption of affective piety, the practitioner is taught to meditate on the humanity of Christ and building an emotional connection through his suffering.[59] First, an agreement was made with Christ that every daytime will be taken to meditate on the Passion. Second, the method was given, and then one of the points assigned in the book was meditated on after which the exercise was finished "with a short colloquie, whereby you must render humble thanks to the Devine Goodness for the mistery which you have meditated."[60] The exercises advised that on the Wednesday of the first week the retreatant must meditate on the flagellation. On Friday, a meditation on the crucifixion. Then, on Saturday, meditation on the removal of Christ from the Cross. The second week begins on Sunday with Christ's bloody sweat:

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[57] Father of the Society of Jesus, *The Exercise of the Love of God Crucified for Us* (London, 1667), Douai Abbey BB1, 14.

[58] A. Paulin-Campbell, "The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius and Shifts in Images of God and Self: The Experience of Two South African Women," *Journal for the Study of Religion* 23, no. 1/2 (2010): 173-197.

[59] See chapter two, 83-85.

[60] Father, *The Exercise of the Love*, 39.

> Consider how great must be the horrour of his Passion, since according to our Evangelist, his sweate became lyke drops of blood running downe upon the earth. […] After communion.
> At the presence of Christ redouble the preceding acts of love
> & devotion renew the embraces
> & kisses of those sacred wounds,
> & lastly having made an entire oblation of thy self, beg of Christ that by the example of his Mother he will so settle thee in his love, that you may never more be distracted or torne away from his embraces.[61]

Each point is meditated on and encouraged to be done so imaginatively. The reader is asked to picture every horror of the Passion but in conjunction with Christ's loving embrace.[62] Love and suffering are intertwined at every point of the exercise. Finally, the author exclaims that by doing this meditation "you may never more be distracted or torne away from his embraces." The reader is effectively brought back from any emotional suffering or spiritual distress they might have felt before the exercise. After reading the book and practicing its methods for the first time, the reader could return and reuse these words to refocus their mind at any time. Essentially the reader would practice and learn the correct emotives to ease emotional suffering.

A ten-day retreat outlined within the book *Philothea's Pilgrimage to Perfection* advised a solitary practice towards perfection or the "advancement of that happy end [death]."[63] The

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[61] Father, *The Exercise of the Love*, 285-6.

[62] See also, Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 47-53.

[63] John of the Holy Cross Moore, *Philothea's Pilgrimage to Perfection. Described in a Practice of Ten Days Solitude* (Bruges, 1668), 5; John Moore, a Franciscan monk from Norfolk. Joseph Gillow, *A Literary and Biographical History, or Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics from The Breach with Rome, in 1534, to the Present Time, Vol. 1* (London: Burns & Oates, [1885-1902]), 600-601.

author, John Moore (John of the Holy Cross, 1630-1689), dedicated the book to the Countess Dowager of Sussex,[64] and referred to the reader as a woman, namely Philothea, "lover of God."[65] *Philothea* was written with a clear and casual style, aimed at English women and lay audiences alike. Less time was given to preaching in the preface, and Moore focused instead on the practicalities of the retreat. Every detail was given down to the preparation needed for solitude, the choice of place and time, posture of the body, and the subject of meditation. He gave special attention to the "affections" during meditation, instructing that "we must permit our soule to spreade and disolate, as much as possible; if thou findest thy heart, to pant & swell, with aboundant sweetnesse, ease it some by gentle Aspirations, & amorous sighs, as God shall then inspire thee."[66] The physical was once again intertwined with the cerebral, the practice of devotion affecting body and mind. Moore continued that following meditation was, "Oblation, wherein the soule recommends her selfe, & all her Affections & Resolutions, to the Protection of Gods holy grace; cheerfully giving up her selfe to him."[67] Moore wrote lavishly on the effects of solitude, explaining how through this method of meditation, the emotional and physical were fought and transformed into perfection:

> In Solitude we ransack our hearts, we discover our secret enemies here lurking in our breasts, & strongly armed grapple with them, expel them, & precent their reentrance into our soules. […] By it we decry our natural weaknes to vertue, […] gaine light to

[64] Possibly referring to Elizabeth Howard, wife of Algernon Percy, 10th Earl of Northumberland, although she died in October 1668.

[65] A reference to the Philothea, the name given to the reader in St Francis de Sales's *Introduction to the Devout Life*, published numerous times between 1609 and 1619.

[66] Moore, *Philothea's Pilgrimage to Perfection*, 32.

[67] Moore, *Philothea's Pilgrimage to Perfection*, 33.

> our knowledge, more heate to our affections, more life to our devotions, […] therby wee becom strangers to the earth, by a just estimate of earthly things, which are transitory & vaine, & enter into a sweet fruition of invisible comforts.[68]

Solitude is thus self-annihilation, cheerful destruction of one's physical self, transitioning entirely into the interior in a "happy end." This spiritual death was obtained through emotionally based soul-searching and mortification. On the fifth day of the retreat, the morning exercise asked the retreatant to consider the points of the "Mortification of the Senses" and the "Mortification if the Passions".[69] Emotional suffering and transformation was the only path to the happiness of unification with Christ.

The spiritual books found in the Antwerp library collection connect emotions of love, happiness and suffering as distinct driving forces of the Catholic regime's practices. The words served as tools for how to feel and perform emotion acceptably within the emotional regime. Further, the material was an aspect of blurring the lines between the material/exterior and the mind/interior. The books were physical objects but could be memorised and internalised for private devotion and read aloud in recreation for communal spiritual guidance. In terms of themes, the two main focuses were on Christ's suffering in the Passion and in building a personal relationship with him. The authors stressed the importance of feeling, physically and mentally, both of these experiences. Physical emotional responses were encouraged, through amorous sighs, and fervent love and desire was something to be cultivated and perfected. Christ's presence was also described in terms of love and desire, through the language of the soul, embracing in his arms and even tenderly watching beside the reader's pillow. To be included in the convent library, the books had to be approved by Church superiors, therefore,

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[68] Moore, *Philothea's Pilgrimage to Perfection*, 3.

[69] Moore, *Philothea's Pilgrimage to Perfection*, 130-135.

the messages explored in this section explain the norms and boundaries of the Church's emotional regime. What emotions should be felt by the nuns were explicitly described on these pages, guiding them in times of emotional suffering. How the nuns engaged with these instructions is the next important step.

iii. Reading in Practice

> She became confounded at her pride and from that time seemd all her life after to be carryed as by a streem to the contempt of her self and to all humble actions so that there was no action so abject and disgustfull which she would not imbrace with great joy and satisfaction, […] she was very earnest to goe into every Exercise to perfect and prepare her self for death and dyd soon after her last, she had a very Strong and a long Agony notwithstanding her great Age, and was perfectly present to her self to the very last, holding her Crucefix in her hand and offten kissing it and thus expired most happyly.[70]

In the Antwerp annals, the only constant and in-depth description of reading is of the spiritual exercises. Elizabeth Huddleston's (Ignatia of Jesus, d.1688) obituary reflects this. Jesuit spirituality provided the preferred method of imaginative contemplation for Carmelite nuns, understandable because of the Jesuits' close bond with St Teresa.[71] The use of Jesuit methods as a guiding force of the emotional regime was complicated by the Carmelite friars, who did not accept the Society's direction in the Antwerp convent, as their dispute discussed in chapter one shows. Despite the friars' condemnation of the Jesuit presence, the nuns prevailed, and the spiritual exercises became an accepted tool of their particular emotional regime. For Elizabeth

[70] "Short Colections," 154.

[71] See chapter two, 95 and 102.

Huddleston, it appears her life fulfilled the aims of the books held within the library: to undertake exercises in preparation for a most "happy" end. The fact that she was described as being present, or awake, during her dying moments, holding a crucifix, shows the emphasis the nuns made on both Christ's Passion, his death as salvation, and the transitionary power between the exterior and interior. This was influenced not just by Catholic doctrine and the spiritual foundations of the Carmelite order, but also directly through the words in their library. The intentional blurring of the mental and physical in spiritual literature is realised through that happy death, that moment where the line disappears and the physical is annihilated and permanent union is achieved. In this section, the nuns' engagement with the exercises and their reflections on the meaning they found through this practice, which relied on spiritual reading as demonstrated by the books themselves will be explored to substantiate my argument.[72] First, I will argue that reading was more than just mandated practice by the Church; it also had emotional and spiritual importance in their lives. Second, I will show how books served as a tool for easing emotional suffering that worked to bring the nuns back under the emotional regime to which they wished to belong.

Catherine Darcy's notes and reflections cover many aspects of her life, and she described her mystical experiences and emotional states at length. In one of her papers, Catherine Darcy stated that "in hearing or reading of sufferance [her] heart seems to feel a particular dearness of affection & content," continuing to say that her "place of refuge in all troubles shall be his sacred wounded side in which [she] will endeavour to live and imbrace all Crosses therein, reflecting on what he hath inspired me to, not to think of [her] owne Sufferings (but his)."[73] Throughout her writing, Catherine Darcy emphasised the importance of Christ's Passion to her. His suffering was the catalyst for her spiritual practice and mystical visions.

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[72] As in Bowden, "A Distribution of Tyme," 99-116.

[73] "Short Colections," 162.

The many books held in the Antwerp library focused on this subject would have been an excellent source for her emotional and spiritual needs. This is evident when she mentioned reading of Christ's suffering and the emotional response it invoked in her.

Four nuns have obituaries in the Antwerp annals that include detailed written reflections on undertaking spiritual exercises, including Catherine Darcy. All four documented the insights and "lights" they received under headings for each meditation they undertook. The meditations would have been guided by a Jesuit spiritual director who read from books like the ones explored in the previous section. The overall retreat considered a single theme with each meditation focused on smaller aspects of the theme. Included in Catherine Darcy's obituary was a documented eight-day retreat during May 1651. There were twenty-three reflections written by her, each indicating the retreat had two to three sessions per day. Topics included meditating on religious vocation, sin, death, desire of perfection, the kingdom of Christ, nativity, presence of God, and scenes of the Passion, such as the whipping at the pillar and carrying of the cross.[74] On the point of the presence of God, Catherine Darcy recorded:

> 17 Med <u>Presence of God</u>
>
> Extraordinary light in the composition of place beholding the divine presence as a clear Sun. before whole light all created objects were as not, through his penetrating power and without his divine essence and presence would cease to be
>
> admired the excellency of creatures particularly my own happiness who both in body and Soul am deified with his sacred presence
>
> distaine to admit of any thought motion or action unbeseeming his divine eyes, but constantly to fix the eyes of my mind on him with humble submission love and reverence[75]

[74] "Short Colections," 167-73.

[75] "Short Colections," 171.

The reflections on spiritual exercises show just how vital text-based meditation was in her spiritual journey. Although Catherine Darcy's writing could almost be considered unfocused, the grammar and description of her experience are rushed, reading through her notes a changing understanding of God can be traced. The actual text that focused the mediation is unknown, but Catherine Darcy's reaction was to imagine God in a different form, as a "clear Sun." This imagery strengthened her comprehension of his power and his presence. God's sunlight permeated "body and Soul," piercing both the exterior and interior, emotionally resonating happiness. Catherine Darcy concluded this meditation by noting that she must focus "the eyes" of her mind towards him.

Catherine Marie Sonnius (Mary of the Blessed Sacrament, d.1710) is the second nun whose exercises are included in the annals. Although she was a native of Antwerp, the chronicle says that she had a "most particular love for the English whos nature she seemd to resemble in all respects."[76] Her included papers feature fifty-six exercises from three to four separate retreats. The topics were often repeated, such as the crucifixion, death, judgement, Passion, and resurrection. In an early exercise, the spiritual director asked the retreatants to consider first, God's love, and then their religious vocation. Catherine Sonnius wrote:

> Exercise by Direction of Reverend Father Visconty
>
> The 2nd Med: of the same Subject
>
> Considering the excess of Gods Love to me, his ungratfull Creature, I detested my Coldness, resolving with the help of his Grace, hence forth to Consecrate every moment of my Life to him, by the practice of a pure Intention and frequent Acts of Love, And seeing I have thus abused the benefits of my Creator, by not useing Creatures as I ought, I thought it most Just, I

[76] "Short Colections," 243. From here referred to as Catherine Sonnius.

should ever Esteem myself, & lay under the feet of all Creatures, even unreasonable, Since they all comply better with their end then I;

3 Med: the End of a Religious Vocation

Much ashamed for my unfaithfulness, amongst so many helps to attain perfection, I proposed to read often my Rules, & esteem them highly, Since the Securest way to bring me to God, & allso to atend my self, not minding others.[77]

Catherine Sonnius shows that it was one thing to live a spiritual and enclosed life and another to completely understand and control her religious purpose throughout that life. Aligning correctly with the emotional regime was not always possible. Catherine Sonnius realised her "coldness" and "ungreatfulness" during the exercise and, through the text, found a way to change, and conform to the acceptable emotional response in which she believed. This correct emotional response was the practice of "frequent Acts of Love" with pure intention. In the next meditation, this time indicated as on the "end of a religious vocation," she was determined to "read often [the] Rules, & esteem them highly." She emphasised reading as the "Securest way to bring [her] to God." Catherine Sonnius "detested" her feelings, inferring that "coldness" in opposition to the "inflamtion" of love, and through reading, she found a crucial reminder of how she could transform those emotions.

The third obituary with recorded exercises was Anne Nettleton (Anne of St Bartholomew, 1621-1691), who professed at fifty-six years old. She recorded her exercises differently, tending to list short reflections numerically, with one year's worth of reflections listed. The monthly journal detailed her struggle to adhere to spiritual life and indicated emotional suffering caused by deviating from the emotional regime. In February, Anne Nettleton was "so dull and dry and full of Idle vain thoughts in prayer that [she] very much

[77] "Short Colections," 245-6.

adoe to recollect my self, […] [she] is negligent in performing [her] actions in the presence of God and in making jaculatory prayers."[78] By July, Anne Nettleton simply wrote, "I find I am not effected much to Spirituall things I so often forget to perform them."[79] Each month she found faults in her practices, being unable to mortify herself more than ten or twelve times and felt difficulty in praying. In the final journal entry, dated December of that year, Anne Nettleton noted an improvement, writing, "My Meditations hath gone better this Month because of the good Meditations of the Exercise / I endeavour most to get resignation / the Number of Mortifications which I practice is but 7 or 8."[80]

Anne Nettleton's writing differs from other nuns as it shows how her spiritual work, including reading and meditation, was not working. Anne Nettleton wrote of her emotional suffering, fuelled by her inability to fit within the regime in which she longed to be aligned. She found it hard to focus on her recollection and prayer if not forgeting to do them altogether. Considering the age at which she joined the convent and her years travelling Europe as a companion of another woman, she was evidently not habituated to her sisters' rigorous daily practice of spiritual reading, which the majority had undertaken since they were as young as sixteen. As Wolfe noted, secular and vocational reading were different practices.[81] By starting at a younger age, other nuns had more time to build a habituation for the correct reading methods. Anne Nettleton is an excellent example of the nuns' need for reading and how it functioned mentally in their spiritual lives. Perhaps her extensive practice of spiritual exercises and accompanying notes were a means to expedite the process towards the emotional regime and perfection. Ultimately it shows that the emotional regime of the Antwerp convent was

[78] "Short Colections," 263.

[79] "Short Colections," 263.

[80] "Short Colections," 264.

[81] Wolfe, "Reading Bells," 136-137.

different from the emotional regime of lay women, or other conventual communities. Anne Nettleton had lived most of her life under different emotional norms. The tools nuns used to fit within their norms, including spiritual books, held different meanings, even if she had already undertaken spiritual reading as a lay woman, thus Anne Nettleton had to relearn how to read such texts as a nun.

The final sister with reflections on spiritual exercises was Catherine Smith. Her life writing included more than meditation reflections; Catherine Smith went further to explain her preferred methods in a letter titled "How I design to make my Prayer."[82] Her method followed that outlined in *The Exercise of the Love of God Crucified Us.* Catherine Smith placed herself in the "Presence of God", as well as the Virgin Mary and her patron St Joseph, and made her preparatory prayer before making a "Short versicle or prayer" to address them.[83] During her exercises, if she found herself "persued by the Enemy or any temptation" she cast herself "into his [St Joseph's] Blessed Armes which has so Often caryed my Dear Jesus."[84] She made her "Preludes according to the Subject of my Meditation," and finally "[observes] allways to apply what [she] meditates to [her] self to make affectionate acts viz Confidence Sorrow Confussion love humility Complasince &c."[85] Catherine Smith's practices perfectly echoed the exercise books contained in the library. Although exercises were meant to be directed by a male superior, Catherine Smith's description reads as directions to herself. Nuns were always at spiritual work both communally and in private. Catherine Smith's writing shows that in their daily prayers and recollection it was possible for the nuns to direct themselves, taking what

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[82] "Short Colections," 283.

[83] "Short Colections," 283.

[84] "Short Colections," 284.

[85] "Short Colections," 284.

they had learned from exercise books, and under official retreats, to manage and guide their private devotion.

Catherine Smith's reflections were similar to both Catherine Darcy and Catherine Sonnius. They show her working through stages of spiritual understanding and emotional change. Amongst her "loose papers" included in the annals was an anecdote about a spiritual book. Once again, the particular book is not specified, but Catherine Smith goes on to say:

> Opening a book once […], which spoke of the treasures we injoy in the passion and merits of Christ Jesus, I was so consolated for allmost 10 days that I had scarce ever found the like, for methought I was more rich then the most powerfull king and it raised a very great Confidence because they were as it were given to me to dispose of them as I pleased, which I did in offering them to the Eternall Father in satisfaction of my Sins and to obtain grace to arrive to that perfection God required of me. […] God delights in a Soul that is in continuall afflictions interiour or exteriour.[86]

The book that Catherine Smith read is reminiscent of *Conversing with God*, analysed in the previous section. In *Conversing with God,* the reader is assured of God's presence and the love he bore for them through the Passion. The reader is specifically told to have confidence in their relationship with God as the key to their spiritual journey. Beyond the book itself, Catherine Smith's emotional response is evidence of the power of reading during a nun's life. She was given such emotional relief by the words of this book that she felt consoled for over ten days. She felt "more rich than the most powerfull King," and empowered with confidence by the gifts God had given her. Perhaps Catherine Smith had been unsure of her vocation at this time, but no matter how she felt, the book triggered transformation.

[86] "Short Colections," 285.

She concluded this passage with a slightly different remark than the revelations the book gave her. If read through the construct of emotional regime, Catherine Smith realised that emotional suffering in the soul was inevitable and incurable, but that was God's plan. She had to suffer repeatedly so that she was drawn to spiritual work, in this case, reading, to be reminded of and kept within the emotional regime – a regime in which relief could be found. Catherine Smith understood this as an embodied relationship with God, both exterior and interior. Physical suffering, such as sickness and pain, and mental suffering, which was almost always tied with emotion, were necessary experiences that were not distinctly separated but occurred simultaneously. To say that God delighted in this was not a cruelty, but as all of these nuns had experienced, opportunities to understand further and make gains towards perfection. This path through suffering also reflected St Teresa's *Interior Castle*, which I explored in the second chapter.[87]

Despite Catherine Smith's revelation on the importance of the relationship between the exterior and interior, the ultimate goal of a nun's life, and the reason all of their books were written, was to reach perfection and that "happy end." Catherine Smith came to this realisation, having written:

> In the Spirituall Exercise I found that in all my meditations I was drawn to an Interiour life which according to the light I had then did consist in a totall and intire disingagment from Creatures and seek my only Comfort in pleasing and serving God in Spirit and truth a faithfull and constant practice of humility and the presence of God and a great fidility to prayer.[88]

[87] See chapter two, 103-112.

[88] "Short Colections," 285.

Perfection and unity with Christ could only be achieved by the exterior giving way to the interior until only the latter remained. Catherine Smith realised this through the spiritual exercises, based on text-led meditation. What she determined to be the key to serving God was also found in books and reading. Private devotional reading physically disengaged Catherine Smith from her surroundings and her sisters. The books' authors guided her in the "practice of humility" reminding her of "the presence of God." Spiritual books were a direct avenue to achieving perfection and vital to conforming emotion to the Church's regime.

iv. Conclusion

The books found in the Antwerp Carmelite library were more than spiritual guidebooks, read as mandated by the Order and Church. They were objects of transformative power, both spiritually and emotionally. Even before taking the veil, young women gave prophetic power to spiritual books. Randomly selected pages convinced them when their longing for a religious life was confusing or undermined by relatives. These incidents were given precedence in the life writing and obituaries of nuns, legitimising their vocation and the holiness of their childhood.

Once enclosed, the nuns had compulsory daily reading. Books were read silently in cells and other spaces in the convent, as well as read aloud in the refectory as a communal activity. The collection was controlled, and only acceptable texts to the Church superiors were allowed to be kept in the convent library. Therefore, the books were built within the structure of the Church's emotional regime. They were used to regulate emotional norms, guiding nuns regarding what they should focus on. This focus was God and nothing else. The final goal was complete interiority and physical annihilation.

As an object, books were material belongings, but when read, memorised and returned to, they remained in the minds of the readers. Catherine Smith rejoiced in the emotional after-effect of one book for over ten days. Each meditation from a spiritual exercise was repeatedly meditated on and memorised, transforming the nuns' understanding of their lives and spiritual goals. Visionary books too straddled a line of exterior and interior, when Catherine Wakeman held in her hands a titled book held in a familiar space that was entirely in her mind while simultaneously existing in a mystical realm. The authors of the books pushed this narrative of an indefinite reality of spirituality – the nuns taking this within themselves and shaping their understanding of enclosed religious life.

The emotional regime in which the books were structured share the same indistinct qualities of the exterior/interior binary. Reddy's methodology recognises emotional conflict as an oppositional force. Those who did not fit the regime experienced emotional suffering, creating emotional refuges outside the regime to find relief. Here the nuns long to fit within the regime. The books contained theological material that explained and enforced the regime. Therefore, nuns experiencing emotional suffering because they did not fit within the regime, found relief in the library. Instead of being at odds with the regime the library them led back to it. The conventual library served as an agent of the emotional regime. When a nun was lost or unfocused or had forgotten, in that textual place they could be assured, refocused on their spiritual journey, and remembered the crux of their vocation; God's love was present, and their spiritual happiness in death was found through emotional suffering. This chapter advances the field by considering more than the contents of the library or the daily practice of reading in the nuns' lives, but also engaging with the direct influence books had spiritually and emotionally. By considering what the books said and how the nuns understood that individually and communally, I have shown that reading purposefully influenced and cultivated mystical experience.

Chapter Four

Mystical Space and the Affective Atmosphere

> I continued in the same desires to see her and be with her again, and being out of hope of this by fear I had of her death I was in extreem affliction one time after I had been a long space weeping and making my complaint in the Quire, before the Blessed Sacrament being weary I sat down in the cornner half a Sleep, there came like a bright Cloud allmost over my head, in which I perceived our Blessed Saviour like the age of 10 or 12 years who I saw so beautifull that the content tooke away the extreem grief and heavyness of heart I was in, he said what is in my Creature whom you love so much which is not in me, […] all that good in her is in me, and that I am all good and fill all places, so this past And I remained comforted both in Soul and Body, […] I felt confidence in his infinite goodness towards me, and found courage to serve God.[1]

Anne Worsley described multiple mystical experiences that occurred in the convent space in her life writing. In this example, she was deeply troubled that her spiritual mentor and Blessed Mother, Anne Mazanas, had fallen dangerously ill while living in Mechelen. Anne Worsley's intense emotional state was grounded in the conventual space, specifically the choir and in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, or Eucharist. In her exhaustion, she experienced a vision that entered the space as "a bright cloud." This event was emotionally transformative taking away her "extreem grief" and turning it into courage as the young Christ reminded her of his

[1] "Short Colections," 10-11.

ubiquity. Jesus stated, “I am all good and fill all places.”[2] This was a concept essential to Christian sacred space as well as the omnipresence of God in every place. Moreover, Anne Worsley was not the only nun to have experienced such a vision which entered and permeated the literal space of the Antwerp convent.

In the Antwerp annals, beginning with the foundation and through to the entries of the eighteenth century, twenty-six visions were described as occurring in a specific space. Although there are numerous examples of mystical experience, these twenty-six are stated to have occurred in the choir, the hallways, the dormitory cells, the infirmary, and the stairs to the crypt. Space was not the only variable in such descriptions. The person documenting the experience differed, the sensory phenomena felt changed from sight to sound, to smell, and the overall meaning of the vision drastically contrasted in each account. One nun was visited by a holy figure during a time of need, another levitated in the choir filled with immense joy, while the sudden reverberation of singing alerted the community to the impending death of a sister. All of these mystical experiences were emotionally transformative and affected the entire community, whether they were in awe of pious love or moved to weeping in grief and loss. Nicky Hallett has asserted it is through the senses, and I argue through emotion and mysticism as well, that “the whole space, even its most domestic corners, [became] sacred.”[3] God remained present in all things, in every corner of the conventual space and through the nuns’ experiences a communal affective atmosphere was formed.

The scholarship on convent space has focused largely upon monastic architecture. As explained in the introduction, considerable attention has been given to the relationship between

[2] Anne Worsley is echoing Ephesians 1:23 “Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all,” and Ephesians 4:10 “He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things,” King James Bible.

[3] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 166.

cloistered space and the world outside, as a consequence of the Council of Trent's insistence on strict monastic enclosure.[4] For this chapter, I will focus on the arguments made by Helen Hills and Susan Comilang on the convent as a continuance of domestic space. Hills states that the cell, or bedroom, became a "domestic refuge" as it was perceived through the domestic *habitus* of the nuns' aristocratic upbringing.[5] Comilang argues similarly, focusing upon the social and cultural *habitus* of the early modern closet extending to the convent. Through her analysis of both secular literature and devotional writing, Comilang seeks to answer the question: "given the hidden nature of private devotion, can this space be mapped and

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[4] Elizabeth Lehfeldt, "Spatial Discipline and its Limits: Nuns and the Built Environment in Early Modern Spain," in *Architecture and the Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Helen Hills (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 131; See, for example, Ruth Liebowitz, "Virgins in the Service of Christ: The Dispute over an Active Apostolate for Women during the Counter-Reformation," in *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Rosemary Ruether and Eleanor McLaughlin (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), 131-152; Gabriella Zarri, "Gender, Religious Institutions, and Social Discipline: The Reform of the Regulars," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith Brown and Robert Davis (London: Addison Wesley Longman, 1998), 193-212; Walker, *Gender and Politics*; Claire Walker, "Combining Martha and Mary: Gender and Work in Seventeenth-Century English Cloisters," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 30 (1999): 397-418; Claire Walker, "Recusants, Daughters and Sisters in Christ: English Nuns and their Communities in the Seventeenth Century," in *Women, Identities and Political Cultures in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Susan Broomhall and Stephanie Tarbin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 61-76; Caroline Bowden, "Community Space and Cultural Transmission: Formation and Schooling in English Enclosed Convents in the Seventeenth Century," *History of Education* 34, no. 4 (2005): 365-386; Silvia Evangelisti, "Rooms to Share: Convent Cells and Social Relations in Early Modern Italy," *Past & Present* 1 (2006): 55-71; Silvia Evangelisti, "Monastic Poverty and Material Culture in Early Modern Italian Convents," *The Historical Journal* 47, no. 1 (2004): 1-20.

[5] Hills, "The Housing of Institutional Architecture," 133; Another example of using Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus* in the gendered domestic and sacred space is Amanda Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007), 3.

analysed?"[6] This research can be seen as an extension of Richard Rambuss's mapping of private devotion in space, focusing on the male experience of the "prayer closet."[7] Comilang shifts this to the female experience and argues for a merging of the early modern separation of private and public spheres in the prayer closet, or convent cell.[8]

Hills proposes the term "domestic holy," for "those new spaces produced by formal enclosure at Trent, that nuns personalised or domesticised holiness, as they carved out dedicated spaces for their own particular devotions and informal altars outside of formal church space. Thus, places of marginalisation and separation were transformed into bridges of devotion, transporting nuns into spaces 'beyond.'"[9] Hills demonstrates this by analysing how dynastic blood lines and familial bonds shaped spaces even through strict enclosure of Italian convents. Her use of domestic holy does not entirely line up with my work on mysticism. Although there were dynastic families within the Antwerp convent, the Worsley sisters being one example, there was less importance placed on a continuation of aristocratic performance for the Carmelites. Further, I have already argued in this thesis that the Antwerp nuns did not view the convent space as marginalising or separating – it was English ground in which they found security and purpose. Instead I want to consider Hills' assertion that the nuns transformed their space, through a domestic holiness, into places of "transportation." I argue that through spiritual practice the nuns made the domestic spaces of the convent "holy," infusing ordinary areas with a mystical spirituality. The nuns created spaces outside the choir or chapel that were transitory – where the corporeal and mystical met, and the heavenly realm

[6] Susan Comilang, "Through the Closet: Private Devotion and the Shaping of Female Subjectivity in the Religious Recess," *Renaissance and Reformation* 37, no. 3 (2003): 80.

[7] Richard Rambuss, *Closet Devotions* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 109.

[8] Comilang, "Through the Closet," 82.

[9] Hills, "The Housing of Institutional Architecture," 141.

integrated with the female domestic sphere. In so doing, the walls of the convent were porous not just politically and socially, but also spiritually.

This chapter will consider the concept of domestic holy through textual descriptions of mystical experience. Hills' study was built upon the inventory lists and descriptions of material space that the Carmelites either did not keep or lost during their return to England. Like Comilang's analysis of liminal space through the spiritual literature on the closet and devotion, the textual description of space and what it infers about the perception and understanding of individuals will be the guide to the Carmelite's relationship with their convent buildings and rooms.[10] Further, this chapter will explore the conventual space almost entirely through mystical experiences. How the space of the convent was shaped, perceived and understood will be analysed through the unique experience of the Carmelite nuns' mystical visions; unlike medieval and other early modern counterparts, the Carmelites' mysticism will be shown as grounded within the physical space, not relying on metaphorical meeting places with God. This chapter therefore pushes the boundaries on both conventual space and mysticism scholarship. In this context the mystical setting of the convent relies more closely on the affective atmosphere generated by the nuns, how their bodies and emotions are influenced by and in turn influence the space in which they live.

Affective atmospheres generated by subjects, objects and space is a growing focus in the history of emotions. Ben Anderson and Andreas Reckwitz have both established a framework for "affective atmospheres."[11] Anderson uses the aesthetic affective qualities and

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[10] For more on this see, Margrit Pernau, "Space and Emotion: Building to Feel," *History Compass* 12, no. 7 (2014): 542.

[11] It is interesting to note here that Anderson's article was published four years before Reckwitz but Anderson is not cited in the later article although it does contain the same theoretical background. Anderson, "Affective Atmospheres," 77-81.

applies it to the phenomenology of Karl Marx as his example. This approach applied to the Carmelite material, considers that mysticism was not just an internal spiritual or emotional experience exclusive to an individual, but that these experiences were part of an atmosphere generated and fuelled within the convent space. As Anderson explains:

> Atmospheres have […] a characteristic spatial form – diffusion within a sphere. […] We can say that atmospheres are generated by bodies – of multiple types – affecting one another as some form of 'environment' is produced. Atmospheres do not float free from the bodies that come together and apart to compose situations. Affective qualities emanate from the assembling of the human bodies, discursive bodies, non-human bodies…[12]

Anderson describes a "mood" or "feeling" that thrives within a space. This mood is created and emanated from not just the human occupants but also other factors. Space, especially conventual space, has its own social and cultural grounding. As Katie Barclay states, "space is a relationship or interaction between the material (physical), the activity and bodies of people in that location, time and the social norms and cultural meanings attached to all of these."[13] By using Anderson's affective atmospheres another element of space can be considered, that of communal emotionality, which constantly flows in and out, encircling the enclosed space. The occupants change the atmosphere as the atmosphere too changes them. An ambiguous concept, it nonetheless presents a new way to read spatial experiences, such as mystical visions, as more than theological or spiritual occurrences. It positions them as an active agent of change in the convent.

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[12] Anderson, "Affective Atmospheres," 80.

[13] Katie Barclay, "Space and Place," in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, ed. Susan Broomhall (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 21.

While Anderson considers the phenomenological aspects of affectivity and atmosphere, Reckwitz focuses on practices to look at both affect and space. Echoing Monique Scheer's "emotional practices," Reckwitz also turns to Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus* and practices to understand people's emotional relationship with space, stating that, "the framework does not only account for human participation in practices, but also highlights the centrality of artefacts. [...] Competent human bodies and artefacts thus form specific networks in which social practices emerge, reproduce and evolve."[14] Reckwitz reinforces Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* that bodily reactions are restricted by interpretive schemes. Echoing Ian Burkitt's *Bodies of Thought,* Reckwitz argues that emotions go beyond the classical "hydraulic" mode, inside/outside, and within the *habitus* framework are shown to have cultural, social and spatial restrictions on the body.[15] Ultimately, Reckwitz's inclusion of practices creates a more nuanced approach compared to Anderson; looking for emotional practices and their cause and effect in space goes a step further than simply considering what "mood" or "feeling" instils the atmosphere. Together these theories consider space as socially, historically and emotionally produced.

As we have seen, the Antwerp Annals are communal life writing, collated from the written and oral tradition of the convent over the course of one hundred years. Although it is a literary source, what it contains and the manuscript, as an object itself, is an element of the space, of the affective atmosphere. Father Thomas Percy Plowden (1672 – 1745), after reading

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[14] Andreas Reckwitz, "Affective Spaces: A Praxeological Outlook," *Rethinking History* 16, no. 2 (2012): 248-249; Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?" 193-220. Reckwitz and Scheer published on emotional practices in the same year although Scheer's article has become more ubiquitous with the concept. Nonetheless, Reckwitz use of practices and atmospheres together shows one way that Scheer's proposal can be put into use.

[15] Reckwitz, "Affective Spaces," 252; Ian Burkitt, *Bodies of Thought: Embodiment, Identity, Modernity* (London: Sage, 1999).

what had been completed of the annals at that time suggested that the nuns should "continue [writing] it in the same Manner, and if it were red over once a year in the Refectory I think it would doe a great deal of good."[16] The convent chronicle that collected the writings of its inhabitants served as communal edification. It was shaped by the compiler of the chronicle to justify and legitimise the miraculous and pious nature of the convent and those who lived there. Therefore, the mystical should be read and analysed as an essential component of the convent. Supernatural events and their emotional power permeated everyday life at Antwerp and shaped the way the nuns perceived their lives and living space.

This chapter will explore four key elements prevalent in the nuns' visionary experiences, sacred space, domestic space, the infirmary, and the senses. Through the analysis of these mystical events, the construction, perception and transformative power of an affective atmosphere will be dissected to understand better both early modern Carmelite mysticism and conventual life. The first element relates to the convent's sacred space and considers how the nuns interacted with the religious spaces of the choir and sacred objects such as images, as well as the Eucharist. This section will analyse how the sacred space and materiality invoked transformative emotional events intertwined with the sacred and ritualistic cultural *habitus*. The phrase "sacred space" was coined by Mircea Eliade who sought to understand how the sacred manifested itself in space, memory, nature, and the cosmos. Eliade argued that while contemporary people believe they live in a separation of the sacred and profane, the sacred remains unconsciously connected.[17]

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[16] "Short Colections," 268. Plowden was an English Jesuit administrator based in Rome during this period. For several years he had served as Spiritual Director at the Antwerp convent and was commissioned by Mary Birbeck to write the Life of Mary Wake.

[17] Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987). Originally published in 1959.

"Sacred space" has been used by sociologists, anthropologists, archaeologists, architects and historians of all periods.[18] Natalie Zemon Davis pioneered the study of sacred space in an early modern European context in her study of sixteenth-century Lyon. Further research in this area only has only begun to flourish in the last two decades.[19] Will Coster and Andrew Spicer argue that the essays in their edited volume on sacred space during the Reformation aim to extend the understanding of "many dimensions" of holy places in the European context. They argue that, in the post-revisionism period, "space is also much more than a physical issue; what is of chief concern to most of the historians currently working in this field is not the purely architectural utilisation of space, but what that can tell us about the *mentalité* of the people."[20] Although the aim of this chapter fits within this historiographical framework and seeks to further the understanding of sacred space in this way, the majority of research has focused on the Reformations and the changing understanding of sacred space during this volatile period. This section, instead, focuses on how the mystical interaction

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[18] For sacred space in medieval context see Andrew Spicer and Sarah Hamilton, ed., *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2008); Jacob Lassner, *Medieval Jerusalem: Forging an Islamic City in Spaces Sacred to Christians and Jews* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017); Dawn Marie Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe, 1100-1389* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2003); Frances Andrews, ed., *Ritual and Space in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of the 2009 Harlaxton Symposium* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2009).

[19] Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyon," *Past and Present* 90 (1981): 40-70. For more recent work see Penny Roberts, "Contesting Sacred Space: Burial Disputes in Sixteenth-Century France," in *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Thomas M. Lucas, *Landmarking, City, Church and Jesuit Urban Strategy* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997).

[20] Will Coster and Andrew Spicer, "Introduction: The Dimensions of Sacred Space in Reformation Europe," in *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Will Coster and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3; essays of note in this collection include those by John Craig and Trevor Johnson.

between the individual and the sacred space, was understood by the convent communally. I want to explore how nuns affected and were affected by the sacred space. Hills argued that in Italian convents, nuns had to make the domestic holy in order to personalise and transform space within the Tridentine religious house. I will assert that the Carmelites also transformed sacred space within the framework of Tridentine spiritual practice.

The second element I will consider is the domestic space, the "non-spiritual" places of the convent. The dormitories, cells, hallways, kitchen, crypt and garden were all sites where grounded, mystical experiences occurred. In these spaces, the transformative nature of the nuns' spiritual lives will be shown using Hills' terminology of the "domestic holy." As explained above, Hills showed how nuns personalised and altered different spaces in the convent for their individual spiritual practice. She framed it as a continuation of their pre-religious lives and the domestic *habitus* instilled in them from childhood, thus domesticising the holy.[21] Although the annals do not present evidence of the Carmelites building personal altars, for dynastic or individual purpose, it does provide examples where the domestic spaces of the convent were imbued with spiritual importance. In this section, I will show how the nuns shaped the non-sacred, ordinary places of the convent into transitory, mystical spaces that affected the nuns individually and communally – in which the domestic became holy.

The third element will be a continuation of this discussion on the "domestic holy," focusing on a single space in the convent, the infirmary. I want to analyse the mystical experiences of the infirmary separately because emotionally this space was more complex. The nuns' mysticism of other domestic spaces will highlight the emotional themes of comfort, joy, and humour. The mystical events in the infirmary uphold and strengthen the importance of these "positive" emotions while also highlighting the gravity of the pain, grief, and distress of

[21] Hills, "The Housing of Institutional Architecture," 119-152.

the dying and carers alike. Of all the domestic spaces, the infirmary will be shown to be the most porous between life and death, and the paradox of "dying to the world," and the happiness it instils will be explored. Laurence Lux-Sterritt has shown how dying and "the suffering body played a part in the spiritual lives of both individuals and communities; it gave nuns the opportunity to display good religious behaviour during trying times. […] Death put a stop to decades of slavery to the body, its distempers and its natural emotions. It heralded the beginning of a truly spiritual fulfilment in which she would finally unite with God."[22] Paradoxically, although death signalled the ending of "natural emotions," those too endured for the nuns who remained and even those who joined the heavenly realm, which will be shown through ghostly encounters.

The fourth element focuses on the mystical experiences of sense and smell. Although the three previous sections use sight or visionary experience to analyse the affective atmosphere, the nuns had significant mystical experiences of smell and sound that served as messengers in the convent heralding important knowledge and future happenings. The senses are therefore vital to consider when exploring the understanding of affectivity in the convent.[23]

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[22] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 229.

[23] The history of the senses is a booming field of scholarship ranging from complete histories to philosophical analyses and some historical utilisation. For more see Robert Jütte, *A History of the Senses: From Antiquity to Cyberspace*, trans. James Lynn (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005); Constance Classen, *Worlds of Sense: Exploring the Senses in History and Across Cultures* (London: Routledge, 1993); Michael T. Taussia, *Memesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Alain Corbin, *Time Desire, and Horror: Towards a History of the Senses*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Specifically on space and senses see Anna Barbara and Anthony Perliss, *Invisible Architecture: Experiencing Places Through the Sense of Smell* (Milan: Skira, 2006); Although they do not cover convents expressly, for senses and the religion see Webb Keane, "The Evidence of the Senses and the Materiality of Religion," *The Journal of the*

Nicky Hallett has explored the senses in the English Carmelite convents.[24] Her book on the subject aimed to understand how it felt to be alive in an early modern convent, namely the Antwerp and Lierre Carmelite communities. Hallett did so in several ways, first by focusing on each "sense" in its own chapter, and then using several theories in each. She covers social theories, as well as spatial, gender and cultural theories to present a broad exploration of the senses in Carmelite life-writing. Hallett's research is extensive and at its core is the formation of identity through the senses.[25] Through converging theories of space, gender and culture, Hallett shows that, ultimately, the early modern nun is always transitionary in sensory experience. Especially true for English exiles, the "binaries" of country (England versus Spanish Netherlands), domestic and religious life, luxury and poverty, freedom and enclosure, reality and mystical, life and death, all influence and dominate sensory experience and therefore, the self.[26] Hallett highlights that the self is "created in the active relationship between human bodies and their material environment."[27]

Royal Anthropological Institute 14 (2008): 110-127; Matthew Milner, *The Senses and the English Reformation* (Farnharm: Ashgate, 2011).

[24] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities.*

[25] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 20. For more on identity both generally and in nuns see Claudia Benthien, *Skin: On the Cultural Border Between Self and the World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Suzannah Biernoff, *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Marie-Louise Coolahan, "Identity Politics and Nun's Writing," *Women's Writing* 14, no. 2 (2007): 306-320.

[26] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 20.

[27] Referenced by Hallett, *The Senses*, 20. Original quote from Ian Burkitt, *Social Selves: Theories of the Social Formation of Identity* (London: Sage Publications, 1991) 190.

Hallett's book is essential to this chapter overall, but she does not use emotions in her analysis. The history of emotion and the senses hold similar qualities.[28] As David Howes wrote, the history of the senses "in its fullest development is not only evocative […] it is also interpretative: it makes sense of the past."[29] I will analyse the emotions connected to the sensory experiences to show how the Carmelites saw these experiences as a means to understanding and connecting with their spiritual struggles, the space of the convent and their own identities.

In all four sections, the individual's influence on the communal perception and importance of mysticism will be uncovered showing that, through an affective atmosphere, mystical experiences were not just isolated events that occurred and were shared privately, at least not in the early modern Carmelite tradition. Mysticism had a communal dimension, affecting mystic and non-mystic nuns alike with immense emotional power. Although some women did not experience mysticism, they lived within the affective atmosphere generated by spiritual and mystical practices. Analysis of mysticism in this way has not been undertaken before and this chapter will show how using theories like affective atmospheres sheds new light on early modern religious life.

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[28] Although other work has been considered with the senses and emotion, including a book of collected essays on early modern Religion, the focus has been on sociology, literature and the arts and overall ignoring the space of the convent. For some interesting essays in this area see Susan R. Hemer and Alison Dundon, ed., *Emotions, Senses, Spaces: Ethnographic Engagements and Intersections* (Adelaide: University of Adelaide Press, 2016); essays by Barbara Baert, Jennifer Rae McDermott, Joseph Imorde and Laura Giannetti in Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler, ed., *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[29] David Howes, "Hyperesthesia, or, the Sensual Logic of Late Capitalism," in *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*, ed. David Howes (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 400.

i. Visionary Sacred Space

Throughout the Antwerp annals, the nuns' choir served as the main conductor, a lightning rod, for visionary experience and emotion. Considering the deeply entrenched ritualisation and acculturalisation of this sacred space, this is not surprising. However, it is the range of visions as well as the emotions in the Antwerp cloister, felt by the mystic and transformed by the space that presents a more nuanced approach to understanding the choir as an affective atmosphere. An important aspect of affective atmospheres and one not always found in mysticism scholarship was their collective or communal nature. Carmelite mystical experiences were often described by someone other than the person experiencing the visions – commonly other sisters or the visionary's confessor. An example from Katherine Bedingfield's (Lucy of St Ignatius, 1614-1650) obituary describes her frequent raptures in the choir, stating she was:

> A great Misstress of Spirit wonderfully inlightend, and inflamed with the love of God, and received frequent divine favours and was often seased with such impulses of the love of God that she was forced to hold her self by the seates of the Quire, not to be raised up, or fall down with those divine excesses.[30]

Mysticism was not only an inner experience, shared after the fact in person or in documentation, but simultaneously seen and felt by those around them in the space. Katherine Bedingfield's rapturous seizing of the furniture was clearly observed by her sisters who accordingly discerned her intensely felt love. Similarly, Julia Wigmore (Josepha of Jesus Maria, d. 1697) was noted to have been found by a fellow Religious "coming in the Quire […] Ellivated a considerable height from the ground," suggesting her levitation was from the sheer

[30] "Short Colections," 138.

love of God.[31] This was a love that could physically move a person within real space. Thought to be important enough to share in the convent's annals, these "remarkable" favours were presented for communal edification and to foster a sense that the convent was in direct contact with Christ and the saints. This was imbued in the affective atmosphere of the sacred space. Simultaneously, it reinforced acceptable experiences of mysticism in which the nuns did not pursue acknowledgment or authority – others did it for them.

The Blessed Sacrament, or Eucharist, was an integral element of the sacred space and affective atmosphere of the church. Serving as an object, subject and transcendent being, the interaction of the Eucharist with space and the body is complex. Elizabeth Worsley (Teresa of Jesus Maria, 1601-1642), the younger sister of Anne Worsley, was affected specifically by this manifestation of Christ. In one example, the compiler of the annals describes that:

> Her devotion to the most holy Sacrament of the Alter was so lively that she said she did not only beleive [*sic*], but that she knew God and Man was really present there, and whenever she came neer the place where the Blessed Sacrament was kept she found a particular joy in her Soul and would wonder to her self how any could pass the quire without perceptibly finding an interiour comfort & renewing of Spirit.[32]

The annalist goes further to describe Elizabeth Worsley's veneration and devotion to the "Sacred Passion […] was alone Sufficient to move and excite others to fervour and devotion."[33] The altar holding the Blessed Sacrament was more than a theological construct for the nuns, but a specific site in the sacred space with its own atmospheric pulse. As part of an affective

[31] "Short Colections," 271.

[32] "Short Colections," 77.

[33] "Short Colections," 77.

atmosphere within the convent, the Eucharist was charged with significant emotional power that resonated not just for Elizabeth Worsley but also through her to her religious sisters. Although each nun would have had her own perception and understanding, Elizabeth Worsley's emotional response further contributed to, and enriched, the atmosphere already in existence.

The Worsley sisters were not the only ones to have mystical visions or experience transformative emotions in the space of the choir which resonated from the Blessed Sacrament. Catherine Darcy described the goodness of God she experienced during Mass:

> In the Octive of the Blessed Sacrament at Matins which we say by day light I saw a bright Stream which proceeded from the Blessed Sacrament and reached to my heart during most part of the Mattines, I did not see it with my corporall eyes neither was it in my power to frame or immagin such a thing when it was gone, it inflamed my heart extreemly and filled so full of joy and devotion that I was forced to use much diligence to restraine my self from speaking even extravagantly of the goodness & love of God.[34]

Catherine Darcy's vision shared similarities with Anne Worsley's, including a bright light, this time as a stream directly from the sacrament into her heart. The space was invaded again by the vision. Catherine Darcy stated that she did not see this event with her physical eyes but insisted that she could not have imagined it. Here she distanced herself from creating or causing the vision, stressing its spontaneous and thus, holy nature. The vision of the bright stream or rays of light was depicted in many iconographical representations of the Eucharist. Medieval women mystics often relied on metaphors from romance literature to relate their mystical

[34] "Short Colections," 164-165.

visions.[35] Here we see early modern Carmelites describing their visions through religious concepts instead, which further grounded their mystical experiences in conventual, corporeal space. Anne Worsley explained why the Eucharist gave her such comfort, writing, "the same Instant I received the Blessed Sacrament I found with a certain truth a sudden light, how God had been the light and strenth of all those Blessed […] I found much content to depend on such a God who as it seemd to me did extend his goodness to us here in the Blessed Sacrament as he doth to the Saints in heaven."[36] It cannot be forgotten that the Eucharist is understood as Christ's literal flesh symbolising his sacrifice on the cross. Even without visions of Christ, his presence was constant and real for the nuns through the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist was especially powerful in a space such as a convent because the choir was the focal point of all daily life. The affectivity of such a sacred place was magnified as it was watered like a garden every day, multiple times a day.

These examples show how the nuns themselves both generated and were affected by an affective atmosphere around the choir. Of course, the choir was already imbued with a cultural, social and sacred importance but the experiences and emotions of the nuns further influenced the atmosphere of the space. The Worsley sisters and Catherine Darcy were affected by the felt presence of God in the space, bringing them joy, comfort, renewal, and an overall feeling of love. Furthermore, the whole community was affected by their experience, both directly through personal interaction and indirectly through reading hagiographies of the mystic nuns. The choir's affective force was magnified by its cultural significance through the continual presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament in the church and the nuns' experiences of that presence was transformed, felt, and repeated. Compared to public sacred spaces, the

[35] This is especially evident in the medieval manuscript of Mecthild of Magdeburg, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, trans. Frank Tobin (New York: Paulist Press, 1998).

[36] "Short Colections," 17.

enclosed convent of the Carmelites, with a distinct culture of mystical practice, increased the affective power of the sacred *habitus*. This suggests the importance of *clausura* for the mystical affective atmosphere.

ii. The Domestic Holy

Sacred space was not the only part of the convent that evoked an affective atmosphere of mystical experience. As noted by Hills, the domestic spaces of the convent frequently merged with the sacred and conversely, the sacred with the domestic.[37] These domestic rooms, the cells, recreation rooms, hallways, kitchens, and gardens, were distinctly affected by a *habitus* of domesticity.[38] That is, these spaces had cultural and social structural properties ingrained in the experience of every nun. Carmelite nuns entered the convent as young women, usually from gentry and aristocratic English Catholic families living in exile. Some had been educated or boarded at other convents, while others entered the cloister from secular households either on the Continent or England.[39] All of them had learned, whether consciously or subconsciously, the social and cultural knowledge and practices, or *habitus*, of the early modern gentlewoman. They understood the household as it was socially and culturally shaped under an elite patriarchal model.[40] This *habitus* did not simply vanish once entering the convent and the remnants of this upbringing remained in their understanding and perception of the domestic spaces of the convent. As girls, the future nuns were taught to prepare for their lives as wives

[37] Hills, "The Housing of Institutional Architecture," 119-152.

[38] Comilang, "Through the Closet," 83.

[39] The Carmelite order did not run schools, but others across France and the Low Countries did such as the Ursulines.

[40] Flather, *Gender and Space*, 57.

and mothers who would manage a household. In the convent, they continued these practices, as wives of Christ, running the convent household.[41] Conversely, the sacred in the domestic was palpable throughout the convent. Marilyn Dunn has posited that the cell, or bedroom, was understood to be the "site of [a nun's] most intense and personal spiritual development. Agostino Valerio, in his advice to nuns, reminded them that their cell was the room of Christ; it was here that their celestial spouse descended when invited by prayer and called by meditation."[42] Although I will begin with a discussion on the domestic holy in the nuns' cells, I will extend this discussion into other spaces of the convent.

The affective atmosphere of divine love in the convent engulfed every space including the dormitory halls and cells. A more whimsical vision experienced by Anne Downes (Anne of St Bartholomew, 1593-1674) occurred in the nun's cell and encompassed her sisters' dormitory. A fellow Religious included the story of this vision in Anne Downes's chronicle entry, stating that:

> Being in her Cell which she Singularly loved she saw the Divine Infant Jesus going along the Domadary from Cell to Cell regaling his Spouses whom he found there, with Sugar plumes which he seemd to take out of his little Aperon, at which she could not forbear laughing aloud,

[41] The convent run as a household is discussed by Walker, *Gender and Politics*, 58-67. Further, under the patriarch of their male superiors. I would also add the Carmelite nuns acted further as mothers of Christ. This echoes the idea put forth by Bynum in *Jesus as Mother*. Although Bynum argues that Jesus has aspects of the mother or Mary, I will consider further in this section the frequent appearance of Christ as a child or baby and this dynamic in the domestic affective atmosphere.

[42] Marilyn Dunn, "Spaces Shaped for Spiritual Perfection: Convent Architecture and Nuns in Early Modern Rome," in *Architecture and the Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Helen Hills (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 156.

> Our first Superiour hearing of it sent for her to know, what had caused her unusiall Mirth, and she in Obedience told her what she had seen.[43]

This vision is unique in its jovial nature and the dynamic way in which it moved through the dormitory. Further, it is significant that the baby Jesus is carried down to other nuns' cells. Clearly the cells are important here, collectively. The narrative stresses that Anne Downes "singularly" loved being in her cell. The space was therefore particularly important for her as a place of comfort. Her feeling of comfort was further shared to her sisters as the baby passed each cell. The narration notes the unusualness of her mirth and laughter but the vision echoes those in the choir in describing the feeling of joy and love. Hallett has argued that the convent was "absorbed by serious silence […] laughter, or causing others to laugh […] was punished […] and regarded unseemly since it caused passions to rise."[44] That was not the case in this example. Although Anne Downes was questioned over her laughter, no punishment was said to be given. The inclusion of this in her obituary indicates that positive displays of emotion were acceptable, within reason, and played a role in the affective atmosphere of the convent.[45]

This jovial atmosphere was expressed in other ways in Anne Downes' biography. It reported a vision of an unnamed Religious who received "Supernaturall favours," writing that she "once saw our Blessed Lord delighting himself with a flower which he held in his hand,

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[43] "Short Colections," 93.

[44] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 151.

[45] Considering Anne Worsley's vision was of the ten- or twelve-years old Jesus, Anne Downes seeing him as an infant was not out of the ordinary, in fact it was more usual for the Carmelites to depict him as a child. But the imagery invokes a more child-like innocence and happiness, without the presence of future suffering. It also points towards a domesticising of the holy. The learned *habitus* of early modern Catholic women was to get married and have children or become a nun. The secular aspect of a nun's upbringing continued through her vocation, manifesting here as a relationship akin to Mary and her child. The nun becomes both bride and mother.

and he said that flower was his beloved Anne of St Bartholomew [Anne Downes], and indeed her rare and examplear vertues proved her to be a beautifull flower of Carmell."[46] Although this small vision was without a stated "space", it indicated two important aspects of the mystical affective atmosphere. First, it showed the importance and culture of Teresian spirituality through the image of a flower "of Carmell." One of Teresa's spiritual metaphors was that of the garden.[47] God played the part of life-giving water in the garden that was tended to and perfected through spiritual practice. In the conventual space, the flower invoked the domestic place of the garden which, through Teresian spirituality, was made holy. The anecdote showed the importance given to cultivation of both corporeal and spiritual flowers as significant to the nuns' spiritual practice.

Second, as Anderson states, "human bodies" are one of the elements that generated an atmosphere. I would argue therefore that Anne Downes' unique character was shared in the annals to continue that sense of communal comfort that she gave the convent. Working as a living memory, the Antwerp annals imbued the domestic space with the presence of loving, pious, and playful women. Further, the depiction of Christ as a child within the domestic space connected the nun with her learned maternal *habitus*. As a woman she was taught the importance of the child in the formation of the family and domestic space. Perhaps this association opens the domestic areas of the convent to become spiritual sites of their own.

A story involving Catherine Darcy in the annals highlighted the social nature of the convent. The entry further exemplified the importance of the nuns' friendship with Jesuit priests and how their presence further fuelled the affective atmosphere. It stated that:

[46] "Short Colections," 93.

[47] For more on Teresian gardens see Ahlgren, "Purification and Images of Water," 143-151.

> She [Catherine Darcy] became acquainted the the [*sic*] Holy lay Brother Mathew of the Society of Jesus who professd a particular friendship for her and Still more inflamed her with devotion to her Holy Angel Guardian which indeed was very extraordinary endeavouring to advance this devotion in all she conversed with, she procured the Angels Image to be placed over the dore of the Recreation Roome and putt his picture in all offices and passages of the house,
>
> going in the hour of sleep to rest, she desired one of the Sisters to call her when it rung to the Quire, but that Religious being then hinderd, begd the good Angel to call her as he effectually did for just at the time, she heard a voice saying, rise your Spouse calls you, and opening her eyes she saw a beautyfull Child, but her earnest desire of coming in time to the Quire hinderd her reflections thereon.[48]

In this passage, Catherine Darcy was an active agent in physically transforming the space. The strong emotional connection she experienced with her guardian angel prompted her to fill the house with his image and advance his devotion to all. The subsequent visionary experience of Catherine Darcy arguably stemmed from this. Her fellow nun, being unable to fulfil her duty in waking Catherine Darcy, begged the angel to come to her aid and, again, he appeared to Catherine Darcy as a beautiful child. The annals included many pieces of Catherine Darcy's own writing, but this story was included at the end, recollected by another sister. This vision therefore left a mark at least on one nun's memory and thereby also on the space of the convent. This was an example of how individuals were responsible for shaping the affective atmosphere of the cloister.

The sacred space of the convent was already imbued with centuries of ritualised spirituality. As I have shown so far, the domestic space was made holy through individuals.

[48] Break included in the passage to improve clarity although it is not present in the original. "Short Colections," 157.

Through their mysticism, their spirituality permeated the domestic spaces, forming their own sacred atmospheres. Sister Margaret Johnson (Margaret of St Francis, 1594-1675) exemplified this. Unlike the majority of nuns discussed in this thesis, Margaret Johnson was a lay sister. Usually of lower social status, lay sisters did not take the same vows as choir nuns. They were allowed to break enclosure to conduct convent business and took on manual jobs. Margaret Johnson was twenty-six when she professed and could neither read nor write but "knew very well how to discover and contemplate God in his creatures."[49] As her religious name suggests, she was deeply devoted to St Francis and the annals mentioned that when she gathered herbs in the garden, Margaret Johnson would call to birds and they would come to her hand, much like her namesake. Her obituary detailed one event in the convent, stating:

> She was much devouted to the humble St Francis and like one in an extacy when she heard him spoke of, the young Religious knowing this would upon extradinary Recreations call her to the Kitchen dore and ingage her in discourse of St Francis where she quite lost her self in devotion, in the mean time others took away all she had provided for Supper and carried it to some other place out of the Reffectory, and brought the Community to it who was highly delighted with the manner of procureing it and a great deversion to the young ones, but when this good Sister heard the pardon ring she would be strangly amased and in the last concern to think she was not ready for Supper.[50]

This passage was unusual for its light-hearted recollection of what was essentially a prank by younger members of the community. The young sisters knew that Johnson would go into mystical ecstasy when discussing St Francis and used the time that she was in this union to

[49] "Short Colections," 91.

[50] "Short Colections," 91.

hide the supper she had prepared. Poor Margaret Johnson was only awoken by the "pardon ring," or Angelus bell, which was rung at dawn, noon and dusk to signify it was time for a devotion to the Incarnation.[51] When the girls showed the rest of the community what they had done, they were "delighted." This story was odd on first reading, the young sisters were teasing a lay sister doing her job in the kitchen but on closer reading it was more than just a prank; it proved the intensity and sanctity of Margaret Johnson's devotion to her patron saint, while at the same time, showing the community's loving respect of their lay sister. Although she could not read or write, barring her from the liturgical work of a choir nun, she still practiced and experienced an intense spirituality within the domestic space. Recorded in the annals for posterity, this was an edifying example of the spirituality that permeated the convent through specific individuals, no matter their status or role.

Until now, examples of the domestic holy have revealed an affective atmosphere imbued with happiness, joy, and laughter. Despite the previously stated requirement for silence and moderation of emotion, the annals showed that some laughter, within reason, was an accepted emotional style of the convent. Although nuns were expected to practice self-annihilation and "dying to the world," their spiritual goals continued to be mediated through corporeal experiences.[52] As I have previously discussed, regarding the importance of suffering in the convent's narrative, the affective atmosphere of comfort became a paradox when met with the significance of death to a nun. Catherine Burton wrote of a vision she had concerning Catherine Darcy:

> She appeard to me in my sleep, […] I think it was about one in the morning that I thought this Religious was represented before me in my cell, at first I was afrighted knowing she was a

[51] "Short Colections," 321.

[52] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 217-247.

> Spirit, but at length I resolved to take so much courage as to speak to her, then calling upon Sister Clare, so she was named I asked her if she were in heaven, she then seemd to come nigher me and appeard extreemly beautyfull and answerd yes. […] It is impossible to express the change I found in my self.[53]

Visions of the dead and mystical events surrounding the dying or sick were prominent throughout the annals, highlighting a unique aspect of the affective atmosphere. In this space, emotions become more complex and harder to contain especially for a nun aiming for the goal of "dying to the world." The spiritual culture surrounding the Blessed Sacrament and the playful eccentricities being displayed in those comforting spaces of the choir and living areas were heightened in the infirmary.

iii. The Infirmary

Although early modern Catholics believed diseases had natural causes, "they also shared a common belief that God had created sickness as a punishment for sin, and that the faithful could accept their diseases as a test and a purgation designed to perplex God's enemies."[54] This was no different for the Carmelite nuns as their sicknesses were framed as Christian suffering and the acceptance of pain towards dying "a good death."[55] The infirmary's atmosphere was complex, nuns' giving care to the ill emphasised the comfort of God's love, while mixed with the disgust, grief, compassion, and fear of dying.[56] Lux-Sterritt has noted that despite the strict

[53] "Short Colections," 181.

[54] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1565-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 75.

[55] Lux-Sterritt also states this for the Benedictines in her chapter on dying, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 217-247.

[56] For more on compassion see, McNamer, *Affective Meditation*.

ritualisation of death for nuns, "when [they] lost life-long friends, they felt the blow sharply. Their tears were therefore both cultural and emotional at once. Their love and admiration for their deceased Sister," was expressed through acts of care for the body, "they were privileged to have a few more intimate moments with the physical presence of their beloved."[57] The Carmelites also depicted such scenes in their annals, with the added inclusion of mystical experiences pre- and post-death. Overall, there was joy in a nun's death as she took that final journey to God, but her sisters were only human. Margaret Mostyn (Margaret of Jesus, 1625-1679) was also visited by her guardian angel, this time while working in the infirmary:

> Margarett was here Infirmarian in the time of the Sickness of Sister Dorathy, and thought it a Slavery to be confined to doe some things about her in which she had great difficulty and disgust, when behold she presently perceived her good Angel performing them; telling her, that if she could not doe it, he would performe that office for her, for he esteemd it an honour, to serve the spouse of Christ, and if she knew the beauty of her Soul she would think her self even in heaven to be near her [Dorothy of St Francis Hicks].[58]

The angel appears as an agent of guidance and assistance, this time as a reminder that despite Sarah Hicks's (Dorothy of St Francis, 1613-1648) sickness, namely of small pox which spread through the city of Antwerp and the convent during this period, her soul remained pure and beautiful through the love of God. Margaret Mostyn's emotions of disgust and the burden she felt as Infirmarian were transformed by the angel's actions and words. The story goes on to say that, "having no greater consolation, then to performe things of greatest difficulty about her, and ever after see, a glory and an attrictive beauty about her Person, and even the memory of

[57] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 234.

[58] "Short Colections," 140.

her, gave her comfort." Margaret Mostyn then described a final vision three years later, in her own words, "praying before the Image of our Blessed Lady, the Sacred Virgin appeard […] and asked me if there were any other friend I desired to see, and presently I thought upon Sister Doroahy."[59] What happened after this was unclear in Margaret Mostyn's narrative but it shows that the infirmary was a space of transience and transformation, not just for the sick and dying but also for the living on their spiritual journey. Through the mystical, discomfort and disgust was transformed into acceptance, of intimate care, and this shows that the boundaries between life, death and eternity were thin. This was enforced through the intrusion of holy figures within the physical space serving as a reminder of the holiness of "dying to the world." Margaret Mostyn struggled with her pious duty and the uncomfortable realities of sickness and dying. This emotional turmoil was mitigated through the mystical experience which strengthened her resolve on the spiritual purpose of her work. Mystical experiences were not just personal events that occurred spontaneously, but a practice built into the convent *habitus* that encouraged communality.

Finding that the infirmary was especially active in mystical and atmospheric transformative energy is unsurprising considering that the space served as a middle-ground between life and the afterlife. Describing the death of Katherine Bedingfield, the annals showed the infirmary as yet another centre of communal mystical experience:

> She would sometimes desire the Religious to Sing and particularly *Sanctus* which she her self Sung 2 or 3 days before her death with *Alleluia,* which when she had done she joyned her hands togeather, O yett a while we must say *Kyrie eleison* but there, and then pointed up to heaven with her finger we shall say forever *<u>Aleluia</u>* and so held her hand in that manner a good while as one in deep consideration, and then tears flowd from her eyes […] she concluded the happy

[59] "Short Colections," 140.

> course of her Holy life by a most Saint like death […] but the sensible loss of so great an example was unspeakably lamented by the Community and is still deplored.[60]

Considering the annals as both justifying their spiritual experiences as women in a post-Tridentine period when mysticism was under suspicion, as well as an object of communal edification, the scenes of death described within serve to strengthen the narrative of the nuns' pious lives. Nuns could not be martyrs, but the Carmelites framed their narratives as being just that.[61] Their suffering was exemplary and always met with patience.[62] In this example, the singing of hymns as well as Katherine Bedingfield's pointed hand to heaven culminating in flowing tears indicated an emotionally charged scene for the community. However, her death, "unspeakably" lamented and deplored, highlighted a theological divergence. Despite the holy suffering and death of their sister, her humanity and that of her community could not be supressed.

The death of Agnes Rosendell (Agnes of St Albert, 1615-1642) was similar in its narrative of martyrdom as well as the intimacy and care displayed by her sisters. The annals state:

> Upon the very evening before she dyed she spred her Armes in forme of a Cross and when they wished her to put them again into the bed she told them that she was ready to doe what they commanded, but yet (said she) if you will give me leave I should be glad to dye in forme of a Cross, and being much about the same time assaulted by certain furious pains of the head one

[60] "Short Colections," 139.

[61] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 224; Walker, "Hangd for the true faith."

[62] Although there are certainly examples of frustration and confusion throughout the chronicle, including by the first Prioress Anne Worsley. This inclusion, though, serves the narrative further by highlighting the struggle of religious life as inferior beings and only through God can this be remedied.

> of the Religious with advice of the Reverend Mother who was then even dissolving her self as it were in tears both of love and grief, desired the Sick to let her try whether the holding her head very hard might not perhaps give her some little ease.[63]

Although Agnes Rosendell was thankful for her sisters giving her some relief while holding her head, she continued to say "I like not to feel so much ease when I consider how Christ our Lord sufferd pains, nor doe I allso like that the feeling of a little ease for this short time, should diminish any one haires breadth of that everlasting joy and glory which I hope for shortly."[64] The narrative concluded with her death that, although agonising in pain, Agnes Rosendell was smiling.[65] This passage shows the true intensity of emotion in the space of the infirmary. The holiness of this space was no less than that of the choir as the love of Christ and of one another was felt without any religious or cultural structure. These raw moments of sickness and dying were also a part of the convent's affective atmosphere and just as spirited as the goodness of God emanating from his official altar. Here in the infirmary, the presence of God and his love was even more palpable.

Although death, or self-annihilation, was at the centre of the spiritual journey for every Carmelite nun, the strong emotional connections made within the enclosed space were surprisingly never hidden. What the nuns felt for each other and what they did for one another was plain to see in the pages of the annals. These were included because, for the Carmelites, spirituality was strengthened through community. The affective atmosphere of the convent which fuelled mystical experience was a reciprocal force – mystical experiences added to an atmosphere that in turn created more mystical experiences. This was crucial to the English

[63] "Short Colections," 135.

[64] "Short Colections," 135.

[65] A similar account of smiling is mentioned in Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictines Nuns*, 231.

Carmelites' practice of Teresian and Ignatian spiritualities that sought to bring Christ to their side at all times.

iv. Mystical Smell and Sound

The affective atmosphere was constructed in particular holy and domestic spaces through the senses and discernment of the holy. So far, this chapter has focused on sight and mystical vision as the main proponent but smell and sound were equally evocative of the affective atmosphere. Katherine Bedingfield's death was made all the more visceral through celestial music, showing the importance of all senses to discern holy experiences. Sound especially traversed the entire community while smell, or odours, were indicators of spiritual knowledge. These sensory events were all linked to emotional experience. In this period, "to talk about the emotions meant to talk about sensory perception."[66] Lux-Sterritt has pointed out that studying the emotions "in conventual writings reveals that religious women's relationships to the body and to physically mediated experiences was complex, and at times paradoxical."[67] She goes further to explain that like emotions, which "were considered with great defiance, […] everything revolved around a subtle understanding of the nature of spiritual love. The same delicate balance can be applied to the early modern relationship to the senses."[68] Nicky Hallett's discussion on smell in the convent is pertinent here, as she explores the anecdote of the sweet-smelling corpse of a nun at Lierre, matching the sweet-smelling corpse of the order's founder, St Teresa of Avila. Through this miraculous connection, Hallett shows how individual sensibility was transformed

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[66] Herman Roodenburg, "The Senses," in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction,* ed. Susan Broomhall (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 42.

[67] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 185.

[68] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*, 186.

into the collective. Uniting the community, the mystical odour created a collective sense of identity for the Lierre convent.[69] This aligns with my argument on the importance of communal perception of the mystical, especially made through the senses. Hallett's chapter on sound focuses on the ordinary noise of the convent. It provides an interesting insight into the lived experience of enclosure, the daily ringing of bells, the clicking of elderly nuns' crutches, as well as the importance of silence, inner hearing or miraculous sounds are only briefly evoked.[70] Overall, despite Hallett's expressed interest in the sensory space of Antwerp, space is largely unexplored throughout the book. In this section, I want to further develop her discussion of the smells and sounds associated with mystical experience and how they permeated and emotionally affected the atmosphere of the convent.

Writing of Agnes Rosendell's saintly death, laid out like a cross, the annals mentioned that "a little time before she dyed their was heard in Choris some part of the *Salve Regina* distinctly repeated, and when it was told to her [Agnes Rosendell]; she said it is for me and a sign I shall be soon calld to another life."[71] The *Salve Regina* was the final prayer of the rosary and described those weeping and mourning turning to Mary for mercy as the mother of Christ. Agnes Rosendell recognised the significance, knowing that although she would suffer through death, Christ's promises of a new life would come to fruition. Mystical sounds and music were perceived to foretell or mark death, serving, to use a contemporary phrase, as a "soundtrack" for the next phase of life.[72] Furthermore, they were emotionally transformative.

After the lamented and tear-filled death of Katherine the whole community shared a sensory vision:

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[69] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 163-164.

[70] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 144-160.

[71] "Short Colections," 137.

[72] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 158.

> In the presence of her afflicted Spirituall Children our all powerful God was pleased to turn their grief into joy and give them to understand the begining of her Beatitude for all her desolate Children distinctly heard with their Corporall eares that the holy Angels, here upon earth honourd her most happy Soul with heavenly Musick and accompanyed the same even to the throne of God with Canticles of joy.[73]

In contrast to earlier visions, the writer of this story mentioned that the nuns heard this angelic choir with their "Corporall eares." By denying the distinction between reality and the inner senses, as in "my mind's eye," this narrative sent a clear message to the nuns' superiors and the contemplative community: that this was a truly miraculous occurrence that could not be denied. As Hallett explains, "as when the intact corpses are said to exactly resemble the deceased nun in life, identification of [particular voices] serves to authenticate the event, makes a singularity natural by placing it in the domestic place in which nuns lived and died. Spaces are thus sanctified, continuous, sensorially endorsed and blessed."[74] The singing also transformed the emotions, turning their laments into joy as God showed them the true meaning of spiritual death, that Katherine Bedingfield had joined him at his throne and one day they all would be with him and their deceased sister.[75] A choir of angels celebrating a saintly death became another mystical experience, transfixed in the affective atmosphere of the convent, giving those who mourned the death of their sisters hope and joy for their departed souls.

The hope and joy created by these musical visions was not wholly dependent on death. Hallett documents various "celestial" sounds, music and utterances throughout the Antwerp

[73] "Short Colections," 139.

[74] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 158.

[75] For more on music and communal expression of emotion see, Fisher, "Themes of Exile," 281-306.

and Lierre annals, stating "their accounts [of celestial notes and harmony] enable [the nuns] to discuss 'off-stage' events, opening up an extra-auditory reality within their spiritual scheme."[76] Catherine Smith experienced celestial sounds,

> On X'mass Night being confined to her bed, she made the person who was ordered to Stay by her goe down to the Masses, and being herself in an anxious disolate way, on a Sudden she heard a most delightfull heavenly voice just at her Window which continued a considerable time and then by degrees lessend and seemd to loose it self as high in the aire but left her much comforted with a great peace and tranquillity of Soul.[77]

This passage is another example of the domestic space being transformed by mystical experience into the holy. Catherine Smith's anxiety was understandable considering she was missing an important Mass, that of Christ's birth. Through the "heavenly voice," her anxiety was soothed – the celestial sound confirming the holiness of the convent and of the nun even within Catherine Smith's cell. The nuns' experience of mysticism once again shows that the affective atmosphere was emotionally transformative, soothing desolate anxiety into comfort. In these examples of mystical sound, space remains a focus. How space was perceived and understood was mediated through the senses. Hallett posits that "space, after all, produces sensory effects, [the way people imposed meaning on space] is a key component of sensory – as well as gendered and other ideological – identity."[78]

Just as pervasive as sound in the convent, smells and scents featured throughout mystical experience, also often indicating impending death and the perfection of those who had

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[76] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 158.

[77] "Short Colections," 281.

[78] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 20.

died. Odours were associated with sainthood and the miraculous dead as incorrupt corpses with sweet, instead of rotten odours, were venerated as pleasant-smelling bodies were deemed evidence of the deceased nun's piety. As previously stated, Hallett noted the connection made in the Lierre convent between the sweet-smelling corpse of St Teresa and that of the Carmelite sister, Margaret Mostyn. Hallett argues that "the incorrupt, sweet-smelling body has a key role in Carmelite imaginative frameworks that influence their sensory as well as spiritual fantasises. Sensorial historicising, too, has its own history."[79] Only those Religious who found perfection in their spiritual journey would be preserved so well.[80] Writing on the life of Mary Wigmore (Mary of the Holy Ghost, d.1692), Elizabeth Lingen (Winefrid of St Teresa, 1662-1740) noted that, "there was often before her death celesitall odours smelt by severall who knelt by her."[81] In another account, in the hours before the death of Ursula Wakeman (Ursula of All Saints, d.1650), her sister noted "on a Sudden there was so fragrant a Smell in the Chamber, that she her self took notice of it, and askd whence it might be, I answerd it might be our good God, had sent his Angels to fetch her himself, she humbly replyd, she was not worthy so great a favour, and was presently surprised with the Agony of death."[82] Odours, much like music, seemed to be God's supernatural gift to prepare the community for imminent death. Hallett argues that the "experience of smell, […] extends the temporality of the convent in extra-dimensional ways: past and present meet […] [and] in the case of the perfume […], there is also a whiff of imagined future."[83] She explains further that, "the extra-sensory experience also

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[79] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*, 25.

[80] The creation of the Antwerp chronicle was based on the finding of the incorrupt and sweet-smelling corpse of Mary Wake which was discussed in more detail in the Introduction.

[81] "Short Colections," 205.

[82]"Short Colections," 226.

[83] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*,166.

extends the convent space […] and affects the relationship of those within it. […] Scents are incorporated by those who breathe its air so individuals become the space they inhabit and it them."[84]

Mystical sound and smell were integral to the formation of an affective atmosphere. They were not singular experiences, but ones shared by the whole community. Although they often signalled impending death, or a holy death, the sensory was emotionally transformative. Lamentations were soothed to comfort and joy with the sounding of God's angelic choirs welcoming the dead sister into heaven. The senses therefore performed as signifiers of the transitionary, showing the porous nature of the convent. As nuns prepared to "die to the world," the barriers between the physical and the spiritual eroded. The affective atmosphere, like sensory mystical experiences, also existed within this ambiguous, liminal space. Ultimately, these events were included in the annals for edification not just for the immediate community but their superiors and all those who may come across it. When sound or smell was experienced, there was a distinct narrative that diverged from the visionary, to one of corporeality. The senses further grounded mystical experiences in acceptable spaces, objects, feasts, and devotions to the Church, easily discernible by multiple sisters at once, so that there could be no question of heresy. It was through sensory experience that the space of the convent converged with the heavenly realm – creating an affective atmosphere alive with the holiness of God.

v. Conclusion

[84] Hallett, *The Senses in Religious Communities*,166.

This chapter shows that space was an important part of visionary experience for the seventeenth-century English Carmelites. Visions played a role in shaping the conventual space both for the nun experiencing the vision and the sisters amongst her. As experiences were documented and shared among the community, the descriptions of clouds and bright lights were added to the imaginary realm, transfixed into the space they lived. A crucial aspect of this early modern experience of mysticism was the presence of God in material objects, architecture and in human bodies. Compared to the medieval mystics' experience of reaching up to the heavens for their meetings with Christ, early modern Carmelites sought to transport Christ into the spaces in which they already lived. In times of spiritual and emotional intensity, Christ would appear within the convent's spiritual and domestic spaces with bright light and at least on one occasion, sugar plums. The early modern spirituality of St Teresa of Avila and Ignatius of Loyola, which informed the Antwerp Carmelites' emotional practices in meditation, exercises and recollection, sought to bring Christ to the nuns' side.

More importantly, the common theme throughout the annals was the continual presence of God's love. Grief, anger and distress, were all felt at times by the English Carmelites, but the affective atmosphere of the convent, a safe home away from their homeland, was imbued with joy, mirth, goodness, and light all stemming from the divine love of God. At times of extreme emotional states such as grief, longing, and rapture, the atmosphere manifested visions of transformative emotional power. At the same time, those visions reinforced the atmosphere. It was not static but constantly growing and changing with the physicality of the space, the material objects within it and the human bodies that occupied it. Early modern mystical visions were an affective force not just to the recipient but to all those that shared that space. Analysing mystical experience in this way allows us to understand the early modern nun beyond a theological, political, or literary sense; visionary space uncovers a transience in identity and spatial perception with constantly shifting emotional responses between the outside world and

the inner senses. In the early modern English convent, mysticism reflected the unique position of the nuns' lives in exile and in enclosure. The affective atmosphere showed a space that was not "dead from the world" nor one supressing to the senses. The nuns might have aimed for self-annihilation, but the process of dying in a convent was intensely emotional and intimate for the entire convent. The nuns of the Antwerp convent prayed together, laughed together, died in each other's arms, and generated an affective atmosphere where God's love and goodness filled all things.

Conclusion

By analysing the spiritual writing of the English Carmelites through multiple emotions methodologies, this thesis has shown that early modern mysticism was practiced, corporeal, emotional, and transformative. Rather than a spontaneous spiritual event, mysticism was learned. Furthermore, despite the individual nature of mystical experience, occurrences affected the whole community. The Carmelites highlighted the frequency of mysticism in their historical narrative to legitimise, access, and exercise political and social agency. Additionally, through mysticism, the nuns formed an emotional community based on comfort, love, and joy, in which grief and distress were emotionally transformed by their spiritual practices. This is important because it shows a notable shift from the individual experience of medieval mysticism and indicates the need for both a reassessment, and further research, on how mysticism was understood and functioned in post-Reformation convents.[1] By including a history of emotions lens, further insight has been made into analysing the nuns' spiritual practices in addition to investigating their intellectual, social, and literary engagements. Nicky Hallett highlighted the literary importance of the Carmelites' life and spiritual writing, and this

[1] Frances Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Presss, 1993); Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*; Elena Carrera, "The Spiritual Role of the Emotions in Mechthild of Magdeburg, Angela of Foligno, and Teresa of Avila," in *The Representation of Women's Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Culture,* ed. Lisa Perfetti (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 63-89; Dickens, *Female Mystic*; Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages: A Critical Study of Texts from Perpetua to Marguerite Porete* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Liam Temple, "Returning the English 'Mystics' to their Medieval Milieu: Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe and Bridget of Sweden," *Women's Writing* 23, no. 2 (2016): 141-158.

thesis built upon the individual stories to show how the community cultivated an identity through emotion.[2]

Emotional communities intersected through, and were held together by, the convent's spiritual pillar, the first prioress Anne Worsley. Ecclesiastical, political and social communities were just three emotional communities that influenced the convent's mystical landscape through differing emotional styles. By analysing the foundational event of the convent's history, the dispute with the Carmelite friars, I highlighted how outside groups such as, bishops, exiles and patrons, and inside groups such as, choir sisters and lay sisters, interconnected, overlapped and influenced the community emotionally. Anne Worsley's emotional state was explicitly used and promoted as an example, in contrast with the friars, legitimising, and sanctifying the convent's decision to disobey their superiors. The results of the dispute and the narrative of Anne Worsley's life cultivated the convent's emotional community. Focusing on the emotional styles of the communities that intersected the convent showed how differing emotional norms affected groups and helped to explain why some relationships failed while others were made stronger, such as the case of the friars versus the Jesuits. Shared, or at least compatible, emotional norms were important to cultivating security and agency for the convent.

The nuns used the spiritual methods of St Teresa of Avila and St Ignatius of Loyola, both of which were extensions of medieval affective piety, as emotional practices towards union. The saints prescribed practices of meditating on Christ's Passion, aided by spiritual retreats and reading practical guidebooks. I showed how the nuns had understood and evaluated their spiritual practices through their documented meditations included in the annals. Teresa's life and *Interior Castle* promoted a spirituality based on reading and prayer that took the practitioner on a journey through their soul, pictured as a crystal castle. Ignatius' *Spiritual*

[2] Hallett's works on English Carmelites include: *Witchcraft, Exorcism*; "Paradise Postponed"; "Philip Sidney in the Cloister"; "So Short a Space of Time"; *The Senses in Religious Communities*; *Lives of Spirit*.

Exercises made spiritual practice simple and flexible as a means to holy perfection. His own rhetoric of tears showed the importance of linking the personal, vulnerable practice of piety with an acceptable public performance of sanctity to legitimise mysticism in the early modern Church. Both spiritual practices aimed to find union with God and to feel Christ's constant presence by the practitioner's side in a corporeal sense. Although the scholarship is abundant for the two saints, little exists that explores how their spiritual influence affected their followers.[3] By comparing the influence that the saints had on the nuns, the women's experience of mysticism is made clearer through direct links in narrative and importance on particular practice.

Considering that reading was an essential aspect of their spiritual practice, I went through the convent's library collection to compare the nuns' books with the annals' descriptions of reading. In the scholarship, no such analysis has been made before despite the interest in monastic libraries and nuns' manuscript production.[4] Mystical experiences centred on reading show how the strong spiritual connection, made through Teresian and Ignatian spirituality, guided and transformed the emotions of nuns. I undertook close readings of a selection of the books in the Antwerp library, and with reference to writing in the annals, explored how the library was a tool for navigating and regulating emotion in the nuns' mystical practices. Using William Reddy's concept of "emotional regime" as a model for the Catholic

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[3] For Ignatius see, Conwell, *Impelling Spirit*; Nicolas, *Powers of Imagining*; Bangert, *A History of the Society of Jesus*; For Teresa see, Dickens, *Female Mystic*; Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa*; Lanzetta, "Wound of Love"; Williams, *Teresa of Avila*; Weber, *Teresa of Avila*; Ahlgren, *Teresa of Avila*; "Purification and Images of Water"; "Negotiating Sanctity"; Anderson, "Thy Word In Me." For a discussion on both see, Van Gihoven, "The Theurgic Image."

[4] Scholarship on conventual libraries tends to focus on the intellectual, educational, and production, Bowden, "A Distribution of Tyme"; "English Reading Communities in Exile"; Goodrich, "Common Libraries"; Lay, "The Literary Lives of Nuns"; Wolfe, "Reading Bells."

Church, I showed how nuns experienced emotional suffering because they believed they did not fit within the regime's dominant emotional norms.[5] The nuns used the books of the library as emotional tools that guided them back to the regime and emotional relief. This was often facilitated by transformative mystical experiences where the library became a space of emotional respite.

The importance of the library led me to examine the Antwerp annals for visions that explicitly mentioned space. Through this discussion I showed how every space of the convent, both sacred and domestic, was permeated with an atmosphere of emotional mysticism that affected the entire community. The scholarship on convent space has focused on the physical forms of the buildings, how they were used, and how they functioned socially and politically.[6] By using Ben Anderson's affective atmospheres another element of space is considered, that of communal emotionality, which continually flows in and out, encircling the enclosed space.[7] The occupants changed the atmosphere as the atmosphere changed them. At times of extreme emotional states such as grief, longing, and rapture, the atmosphere manifested visions of transformative emotional power. At the same time, those visions reinforced the atmosphere. It was not static but continuously growing and changing with the physicality of the space, the material objects within it, and the human bodies that occupied it. I argued that early modern mystical visions were an affective force not just to the person who saw them but to all those that shared that space. Anderson stated that he purposely left his method ambiguous, but when viewed in the context of other emotional methodologies I don't believe it is. The affective atmosphere of the convent was a culmination of other emotional modes – it was built by the

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[5] Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*.

[6] Hills, "The Housing of Institutional Architecture"; Lehfeldt, "Spatial Discipline and its Limits"; Evangelisti, "Rooms to Share"; Walker, "Recusants, Daughters and Sisters in Christ".

[7] Anderson, "Affective Atmospheres". In this chapter I also consider Reckwitz, "Affective Spaces".

emotional communities that influenced and interacted within the space, the emotional practices the nuns engaged in every day, the cultivation and regulation of emotion under the Church's emotional regime, and finally, the corporeal and transformative mysticism that was born out of these. The result was a mysticism that was communal, tangible and emotional.

Using multiple emotions methodologies on one principal source has produced a nuanced, multilayered explanation of how mysticism functioned in the convent and why it manifested the way that it did in the Carmelite context. The history of emotions methods I used were not formed in a vacuum but diverged from one another to facilitate debates across differing sources, conceptualisations, and arguments. Although current studies often choose to focus on one method, the history of emotions has a shared heritage. By considering more than one within a similarly compiled source, different ways of reading the text brought out different aspects of how the nuns understood and performed their spirituality. Further, it showed the textual importance of emotions included in the annals. This means that emotions were not documented to add colour to a story, but instead had a political purpose in legitimising the convent's decisions and allowing for the discernment of correct spiritual practices.

This thesis benefitted from focusing on one convent, allowing for an in-depth investigation of how mysticism was allowed to, and how it did, function under the post-Tridentine Church. However, the aims of this study would be strengthened by future comparative studies. As in Nancy Bradley Warren's work, further insights may well be gained by exploring the connections between medieval mystics and the early modern convent.[8] The Carmelites at Antwerp owned some volumes of medieval mystical texts, including Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Divine Love*. Excellent research currently exists on Julian's writing comparing her with early modern nuns, but further research would bolster the argument for a

[8] Warren, *Embodied Word*; This has also been done by C.S. Durrant, *A Link Between Flemish Mystics and English Martyrs* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne Ltd, 1925).

shift, or possibly continuation or adaptation, in early modern practice of mysticism.[9] More laterally, I have touched upon the seventeenth-century Benedictine nuns and their spiritual connection to Augustine Baker. Their practice of mysticism differed from Carmelites and using the methodologies of this thesis may uncover a more nuanced answer as to why and how it functioned in comparison. Laurence Lux-Sterritt has already begun this work by investigating the emotional communities of the Benedictine convents.[10] Therefore, a comparison with this order seems like the next logical step, although a consideration of other orders and convents would add more variety and insight as a whole to the understanding of early modern mysticism. Further, Liam Temple's research indicates interesting prospects in comparing early modern Catholic spirituality with Protestant spirituality.[11] This would foster historical debate across the field while also further revealing what made Catholic mysticism unique. Finally, by applying different emotions methodologies to different groups it will be possible to extend our understanding of the lived experience of post-Reformation Catholicism. Emotions influenced and affected more than individuals or communities, they generated institutional, political and spiritual change.

The Carmelites' mysticism was consistently articulated through emotion words: confusion, distress, and grief were transformed into comfort, joy, and understanding. By framing the convent's historical narrative around this mysticism, the nuns' practices legitimised and edified the community into the eighteenth century. Emotional mysticism gave them agency as women and English exiles in seventeenth-century Antwerp. The Carmelites

[9] See the chapter in Warren, "Medieval Legacies and Female Spiritualities across the 'great Divide': Julian of Norwich, Grace Mildmay, and the English Benedictine Nuns of Cambrai and Paris," in *Embodied Word,* 61-96.

[10] Lux-Sterritt, *English Benedictine Nuns*.

[11] Liam Temple, *Mysticism in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2019); Warren does this too in the above-mentioned chapter featuring Protestant Grace Mildmay.

built an identity of the mystical, one which gave them spiritual authority and political security as exiles in a foreign land. The nuns played key roles in spiritually sustaining the English Catholic community in exile and in England. As I have made clear, mysticism was not an individual experience, it was communal within the convent. I suggest that through the nuns' relationships with the outside community, the Antwerp annals, and their influence on spiritual and political spheres, their mysticism transcended the enclosure to inspire other Catholics and even the Church itself.

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MS CA/VI.E Assorted relics and authentication certificates.

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MS CA/IV. Box of documents on external relations including Rome, Bishops, other Carmels and other Religious orders.

CA/V. Box of documents related to houses and places of residence including in Antwerp: buildings and property, external relations and guests.

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